# Drops of Nectar

## Khenpo Kunpal's Commentary

## on

## Shantideva's Entering the Conduct of the Bodhisattvas

Volume Three

**Version: July 2004**

# Śāntideva's Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra

## according to the tradition of Paltrül Rinpoche

## Commentary by Khenpo Kunpal Chapter Three

## With Oral Explanations by Dzogchen Khenpo Chöga

## Volume Three

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*Dedicated to the unceasing activities of*
*Tulku Urgyen Rinpoche*

**Contents**

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Andreas Kretschmar

Kathmandu, Nepal

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# Remarks About the Transliteration

## Remarks About the Transliteration of the Tibetan Text

The Tibetan root text of the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra, *spyod 'jug rtsa ba*, was established with the help of the Peking Tangyur edition (P), the Derge Tangyur edition (D), and two modern computer generated editions, one printed by Sichuan People's Publishing House (S) and one printed by Dharma Publishing (Y).[1]

> *spyod 'jug rtsa ba (Peking edition)*: byang chub sems dpa'i spyod pa la 'jug pa, written by Śāntideva, Peking Tangyur No. 5272, Vol. 99, pages 243.1.1-262.2.7, folio 1-45a7, mDo 'grel (dbu ma) XXVI, La. This Peking edition of the Kangyur and Tangyur was begun in 1737 under the Qianlong emperor, reprinted and catalogued between 1955 and 1961, and published as *The Tibetan Tripitaka*. In the footnotes to the transliteration of the Tibetan root text we refer to this edition as text 'P'.
>
> *spyod 'jug rtsa ba (Derge edition)*: byang chub sems dpa'i spyod pa la 'jug pa, written by Śāntideva, Derge Tangyur, mDo 'grel (dbu ma), La. The printing of the Derge Kangyur was begun under Situ Chökyi Jungne[2] and the King of Derge, Tenpa Tsering,[3] in 1733. The Derge Tangyur was printed between 1737-1744. In the footnotes to the transliteration of the Tibetan root text we refer to this edition as text 'D'.
>
> *spyod 'jug rtsa ba (si khron mi rigs edition)*: byang chub sems dpa'i spyod pa la 'jug pa, written by Śāntideva, computer generated print by si khron mi rigs dpe skrun khang, Sichuan People's Publishing House, Chengdu, P. R. of China, by Zenkar Rinpoche, 1982, pages 1-134. In the footnotes to the transliteration of the Tibetan root text we refer to this edition as text 'S'
>
> *spyod 'jug rtsa ba (ye shes sde edition)*: byang chub sems dpa'i spyod pa la 'jug pa, written by Śāntideva, computer generated print by Dharma Publishing, Yeshe De, 95 folios. In the footnotes to the transliteration of the Tibetan commentary we refer to this edition as text 'Y'.

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[1] The most recently published *bka' bstan dpe bsdur ma edition* has not yet been integrated into this edition of the Tibetan root text. See *spyod 'jug rtsa ba (bsdur ma edition)* (PD), krung go'i bod kyi shes rig zhib 'jug lte gnas kyi bka' bstan dpe sdur khang gis dpe bsdur zhus, published by krung go'i bod kyi shes rig dpe skrun khang, bstan 'gyur Vol. 61, pages 951-1048, dBu ma, La. This edition contains different readings from four Tangyur editions, namely Derge (D) [sde dge], Peking (P) [pe cin], Narthang (N) [snar thang] and Cone (C) [co ne].

[2] si tu chos kyi 'byung gnas (1699-1774).

[3] sde dge'i chos rgyal bstan pa tshe ring

We were further able to get hold of four Tibetan editions of Khenpo Kunpal's texts. Among these four texts, the edition of the Zhechen Monastery, probably printed in the forties or early fifties of the 20th century in East Tibet, is the oldest:

> *kun dpal 'grel pa (zhe chen edition)*: byang chub sems dpa'i spyod pa la 'jug pa'i tshig 'grel 'jam dbyangs bla ma'i zhal lung bdud rtsi'i thig pa, written by Khenpo Kunpal, originally printed in Zhechen Monastery, East Tibet, off-set reprint of the Zhechen woodblock print [zhe chen spar ma], 371 folios, published by Lama Ngödrup for Kyabje Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche. In the footnotes to the transliteration of the Tibetan commentary we refer to this edition as text 'A'.

We further used a modern reprint of the zhe chen edition, computer generated and published through Sichuan People's Publishing House, Chengdu, P. R. of China, by Zenkar Rinpoche:

> *kun dpal 'grel pa (si khron mi rigs edition)*: byang chub sems dpa'i spyod pa la 'jug pa'i tshig 'grel 'jam dbyangs bla ma'i zhal lung bdud rtsi'i thig pa, written by Khenpo Kunpal, computer generated print by si khron mi rigs dpe skrun khang, 1982, pages 137-817. In the footnotes to the transliteration of the Tibetan commentary we refer to this edition as text 'B'.

This edition must be treated with caution by any user. The editors have added titles in bold typeface to the sub-sections of the text. If one is not familiar with the original zhe chen edition, it is difficult to distinguish which titles were written by Khenpo Kunpal and which were added by the editors.

Tarthang Tulku published in the late nineties of the 20th century a computer generated reprint of the zhe chen edition:

> *kun dpal 'grel pa (ye shes sde edition)*: byang chub sems dpa'i spyod pa la 'jug pa'i tshig 'grel 'jam dbyangs bla ma'i zhal lung bdud rtsi'i thig pa, written by Khenpo Kunpal, computer generated print by Dharma Publishing, Yeshe De, 512 folios. In the footnotes to the transliteration of the Tibetan commentary we refer to this edition as text 'C'.

We based our transliteration of the Tibetan text mainly on the zhe chen edition of Khenpo Kunpal's commentary and have given variations in spelling and words in the footnotes, consulting the other two editions, following Wylie's transliteration system.

The fourth text, printed by Sangye Tendzin, 1963, in Nepal, proved not to be of any help for the transliteration of the zhe chen edition. This text seems to be a complete rephrasing of Khenpo Kunpal's text. A careful comparison has shown that almost every sentence has been rewritten. Sangye Tendzin himself studied in Zhechen Monastery as a young man. If he had gotten hold of an entirely different version of Khenpo Kunpal's commentary, we can presume that he would have stated so in his colophon. It is more likely that he himself rewrote the commentary, which accounts for

the fact that present day khenpos do not consider this edition as being reliable. Still, Sangye Tendzin's edition is helpful to translators since it often gives different readings and interpretations of the text:

> *kun dpal 'grel pa (sangs rgyas bstan 'dzin edition)*: byang chub sems dpa'i spyod pa la 'jug pa'i tshig 'grel 'jam dbyangs bla ma'i zhal lung bdud rtsi'i thig pa, written by Khenpo Kunpal, woodblock print by sangs rgyas bstan 'dzin, in 1963 (16th rab byung chu mo yos kyi lo), Nepal, 345 folios. In the footnotes to the transliteration of the Tibetan commentary we refer to this edition as text 'T'.

Śāntideva's root text / chapter three

# Śāntideva's Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra

## Chapter Three

## The Thorough Adoption of Bodhicitta

### Tibetan and English

[1] sems can kun gyi ngan song gi //
sdug bsngal bso'i dge ba dang //
sdug bsngal can dag bder gnas la //
dga' bas rjes su yi rang ngo //

[2] byang chub rgyur gyur dge bsags pa //
de la rjes su yi rang ngo //
lus can 'khor ba'i sdug bsngal las //
nges par thar la yi rang ngo //

[3] skyob pa rnams kyi byang chub dang //
rgyal sras sa la'ang yi rang ngo //

[4] sems can thams cad bde mdzad pa'i //
thugs bskyed dge ba rgya mtsho dang //
sems can phan par mdzad pa la //
dga' bas rjes su yi rang ngo //

[5] phyogs rnams kun gyi sangs rgyas la //
thal mo sbyar te gsol ba ni //
sems can sdug bsngal mun 'thoms la //
chos kyi sgron me sbar du gsol //

[6] rgyal ba mya ngan 'da' bzhed la //
thal mo sbyar te gsol ba ni //
'gro 'di ldongs par mi 'god cing //
bskal pa grangs med bzhugs par gsol //

[7] de ltar 'di dag kun byas te //
dge ba bdag gis bsags pa gang //
des ni sems can thams cad kyi //
sdug bsngal thams cad bsal bar shog /

[8] 'gro ba nad pa ji srid du //
nad sos gyur gyi bar du ni //
sman dang sman pa nyid dag dang //
de yi nad g.yog byed par shog /

[1] Gladly do I rejoice
In the virtues of all beings who are relieved
From the sufferings of the lower realms and
(Gladly do I rejoice) in those who dwell in happiness (though) infused with suffering.

[2] I rejoice in that gathering of virtue
That is the cause for the enlightenment (of arhats and pratyekabuddhas).
I rejoice in (all) sentient beings who are definitely liberated
From the misery of saṃsāra.

[3] I rejoice in the enlightenment of the protectors
And also in the levels of the sons of the victors.

[4] With gladness I rejoice
In the oceanic virtues of directing the mind (toward supreme enlightenment),
Establishing all sentient beings in happiness,
And in the deeds that benefit sentient beings.

[5] With folded hands I beseech
The buddhas of all directions:
"I supplicate you to shine the lamp of dharma
For (all) those sentient beings who are bewildered in the darkness of misery."

[6] With folded hands I beseech
The victors who wish to pass into nirvāṇa:
"I supplicate you to remain for countless aeons
And not to leave these beings in blindness."

[7] Thus by having performed all these (seven sections mentioned above),
And through whatever virtue I have amassed,
May all the misery of all sentient beings
Be cleared away.

[8] For as long as beings are ill
And until they are cured from their diseases,
May I become their medicine and their physician
And may I become their nurse.

[9] zas dang skom gyi char phab ste //
bkres dang skom pa'i gnod pa bsal //
mu ge'i bskal pa bar ma'i tshe //
bdag ni zas dang skom du gyur //

[10] sems can phongs shing dbul ba la //
bdag ni mi zad gter gyur te //
yo byad mkho dgu sna tshogs su //
mdun na nye bar gnas gyur cig /

[11] lus dang de bzhin longs spyod dang //
dus gsum dge ba thams cad kyang //
sems can kun gyi don sgrub phyir //
phongs pa med par btang bar bya //

[12] thams cad btang bas mya ngan 'da' //
bdag blo mya ngan 'das pa bsgrub //
thams cad gtong bar chabs gcig la //
sems can rnams la btang ba mchog /

[13] bdag gis lus can thams cad la //
lus 'di ci bder byin zin gyis //
rtag tu gsod dang smod pa'am //
brdeg sogs ci dgar byed la rag /

[14] bdag gi lus la rtse byed dam //
co 'dri ga zha'i rgyu byed kyang //
bdag gi lus 'di byin zin gyis //
'di yi kha tas ci zhig bya //

[15] de la gnod par mi 'gyur ba'i //
las gang yin pa'ang byed du chug /
bdag la dmigs nas nam du yang //
'ga' yang don med ma gyur cig /

[16] bdag la dmigs nas gang dag gis //
khro 'am dad pa'i sems byung na //
de nyid rtag tu de dag gi /
don kun 'grub pa'i rgyur gyur cig /

[9] May a rain of food and drink descend
To clear away the ills of thirst and hunger.
During the intermediate aeon of famine
May I myself become food and drink.

[10] May I become an inexhaustible treasure
For sentient beings who are poor and destitute
And may all the various things they might need
Be readily available to them.[4]

[11] My body and likewise my enjoyments,
And even all my virtue of the three times,
I surrender without any sense of loss,
In order to accomplish the welfare of all sentient beings.

[12] (If) suffering is transcended by giving away all,
Then (since) my objective is to accomplish nirvāṇa—
As I will have to surrender everything at once (anyway)—
It is the best to give (the three bases) to sentient beings (now).

[13] Since I have already given this body
To all living beings to do with whatever they like,
They may at any time kill it, revile it,
Beat it and so forth—whatever pleases them.

[14] Even if they toy with my body
Or make it a source of jest and mockery,
Since (I) have already given this body of mine (to others),
Why should I hold it dear?

[15] Let them do any action to it
That brings them no harm.
May thinking of me
Never be meaningless for anyone.

[16] If an angry or a faithful thought
Arises in anyone who thinks of me,
May that (thought) always be the cause
That fulfills all (their) goals through these (skillful means).

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[4] Literally 'remain closely before them'.

[17] gang dag bdag la kha zer ram //
gzhan dag gnod pa byed pa a'am //
de bzhin phyar ga gtong yang rung //
thams cad byang chub skal ldan gyur //

[18] bdag ni mgon med rnams kyi mgon //
lam zhugs rnams kyi ded dpon dang //
brgal 'dod rnams kyi gru dang ni //
gzings dang zam pa nyid du gyur //

[19] gling don gnyer la gling dang ni //
mar me 'dod la mar me dang //
gnas mal 'dod gnas mal dang //
bdag ni lus can bran 'dod pa //
kun gyi bran du 'gyur bar shog /

[20] yid bzhin nor dang bum pa bzang //
rig sngags[5] grub dang sman chen dang //
dpag bsam gyi ni shing dag dang //
lus can rnams kyi 'dod 'jor gyur //

[21] sa sogs 'byung ba chen po dang //
nam mkha' bzhin du rtag par yang //
sems can dpag tu med pa yi //
rnam mang nyer 'tsho'i gzhir yang shog /

[22] de bzhin nam mkha'i mthas gtugs pa'i //
sems can khams la rnam kun tu //
thams cad mya ngan 'das bar du //
bdag ni nyer 'tsho'i rgyur yang shog /

[23] ji ltar sngon gyi bde gshegs kyis //
byang chub thugs ni bskyed pa dang //
byang chub sems dpa'i bslab pa la //
de dag rim bzhin gnas pa ltar //

[24] de bzhin 'gro la phan don tu //
byang chub sems ni bskyed bgyi zhing //
de bzhin du ni bslab pa la'ang //
rim pa bzhin du bslab par bgyi //

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[5] P, D, Y: rig sngags; S: rigs sngags

[17] May whoever slanders me
Or whoever does me any harm
Or, similarly, whoever insults me in whatever way,
All have the fortune of enlightenment.

[18] May I be a protector for those without protection,
A guide for those who have set out on the road,
A boat, a ship, and a bridge
For (all) who wish to cross (the water).

[19] May I be an island for those who seek an island,
A lamp for those who desire a lamp,
A place and a bed for those who want a place and a bed,
And a servant for all
Beings who wish for a servant.

[20] May I be a wishing jewel, a noble vase,
An accomplished vidyā-mantra and a great medicine,
A wish-fulfilling tree,
And a wish-granting (cow) for beings.

[21] In the same way as earth and so forth—
The great elements—and space (provide the basis for life),
May I always be the basis for providing manifold necessities
For countless sentient beings.

[22] Likewise, may I as well be a cause for providing necessities,
In all circumstances, for the realms of sentient beings,
Which extend to the farthest reaches of space,
Until all reach nirvāṇa.

[23] Just as the sugatas of former times
Directed their minds toward awakening,
And just as they established themselves by stages
In the trainings of a bodhisattva;

[24] Likewise for the sake of all beings
I give birth to bodhicitta,
And likewise I shall also
Practice the trainings by stages.

[25] de ltar blo dang ldan pa yis //
rab dang byang chub sems bzung nas //
mjug kyang rgyas par bya ba'i phyir //
sems ni 'di ltar gzengs bstod do //

[26] deng du bdag tshe 'bras bu yod //
mi yi srid pa legs par thob //
de ring sangs rgyas rigs su skyes //
sangs rgyas sras su da gyur to //

[27] da ni bdag gis ci nas kyang //
rigs dang mthun pa'i las brtsams te //
skyon med btsun pa'i rigs 'di la //
rnyog par mi 'gyur de ltar bya //

[28] long bas phyag dar phung po las //
ji ltar rin chen rnyed pa ltar //
de bzhin ci zhig ltar stes nas //
byang chub sems 'di bdag la skyes //

[29] 'gro ba'i 'chi bdag 'joms byed pa'i //
bdud rtsi'i mchog kyang 'di yin no //
'gro ba'i dbul ba sel ba yi //
mi zad gter yang 'di yin no //

[30] 'gro ba'i nad rab zhi byed pa'i //
sman gyi mchog kyang 'di yin no //
srid lam 'khyam zhing dub pa yi //
'gro ba'i ngal bso'i ljon shing yin //

[31] 'gro ba thams cad ngan 'gro las //
sgrol bar byed pa'i spyi stegs yin //
'gro ba'i nyon mongs gdung sel ba'i //
sems kyi zla ba shar ba yin //

[32] 'gro ba'i mi shes rab rib dag /
dpyis 'byin nyi ma chen po yin //
dam chos 'o ma bsrubs pa las //
mar gyi nying khu phyung ba yin //

[25] When an intelligent person has lucidly
Adopted bodhicitta in this way,
He should also in the future, in order to expand it further,
Inspire his mind in the following manner:

[26] Today my life has become fruitful.
Human existence is well obtained.
Today I have been born into the family of the buddhas
And have now become a son of the buddhas.

[27] From now on, in any situation,
I will (only) undertake actions that accord with the (Mahāyāna) family.
Never shall I defile
This unsullied and noble family.

[28] Just like a blind man
Discovering a jewel in a heap of dust,
Likewise by some coincidence
Bodhicitta has been born within me.

[29] This (bodhicitta) is also the supreme nectar
That defeats the lord of death, (the slayer) of beings.
This (bodhicitta) is the inexhaustible treasure
That eliminates (all) the poverty of beings.

[30] This (bodhicitta) also is the supreme medicine
That pacifies the diseases of beings.
It is the tree that shelters all beings
Wandering and wearied on the path of existence.

[31] It is the palanquin
That liberates them from the lower realms.
It is the rising moon of the mind
That dispels the torment of affliction.

[32] It is the great sun that utterly dispels
The misty ignorance of beings.
It is (like) clarified butter which comes forth
From churning the milk of the sublime dharma.

[33] 'gro ba'i 'gron po srid pa'i lam rgyu zhing //
bde ba'i longs spyod spyad par 'dod pa la //
'di ni bde ba'i mchog tu nyer gnas te //
sems can 'gron chen tshim par byed pa yin //

[34] bdag gis de ring skyob pa thams cad kyi //
spyan sngar 'gro ba bde gshegs nyid dang ni //
bar du bde la 'gron du bos zin gyis //
lha dang lha min la sogs dga' bar gyis //

byang chub sems dpa'i spyod pa la 'jug pa las / byang chub kyi sems yongs su gzung ba zhes bya ba ste le'u gsum pa'o //

[33] For (all) guests, beings travelling on the paths of existence
Who wish to experience the pleasures of happiness,
The (bodhisattva) remains (in saṃsāra) so that (beings attain) supreme bliss,
Thus satisfying sentient beings, his chief guests.

[34] Today in the sight of all protectors,
I summon beings to be my guests, (bestowing upon them) happiness
Until (they attain the level) of the sugatas,
May gods, asuras and others generate joy.

From the *Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra*, the third chapter, entitled "The Thorough Adoption of Bodhicitta."

Khenpo Kunpal's commentary

# Khenpo Kunpal's Commentary

## on the
## Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra

## Chapter Three

## The Thorough Adoption of Bodhicitta

## Tibetan and English

[35] le'u gsum-pa byang-chub-sems yongs-su-bzung-ba'i le'u la gzhung dang mtshan no //

[36] dang-po la sbyor-ba sngon-du-'gro-ba'i-chos / dngos-gzhi dam-bca'-ba / mjug rang-gzhan dga'-ba-bsgom-pa dang gsum las /

[37] dang-po sbyor-ba sngon-du-'gro-ba'i-chos la / tshogs-bsags-pa dang / blo-sbyang-ba gnyis las /

[38] dang-po la tshogs-bsags-pa la yan-lag-brgyad las / snga-ma bzhi le'u gnyis-pa'i skabs bshad-zin / 'dir bshad-par-bya-ba / rjes-su-yi-rang-ba'i-yan-lag / chos-'khor-bskor-bar-bskul-ba'i-yan-lag / mya-ngan-las-mi-'da'-bar-gsol-ba-'debs-pa'i-yan-lag / dge-rtsa-gzhan-don-du-bsngo-ba'i-yan-lag dang bzhi las /

[39] dang-po ni / skyes-bu chung-ngu 'bring chen-po'i dge-ba-gsum las / skyes-bu-chung-ngu'i-dge-ba bsod-nams-cha-mthun la rgyu-'bras gnyis las /

> inserted root text: stanza 1
>
> sems can kun gyi ngan song gi //
> sdug bsngal bso'i dge ba dang //
> sdug bsngal can dag bder gnas la //
> dga' bas rjes su yi rang ngo //

**Third, the chapter on the thorough adoption of bodhicitta**

[35] The third chapter, the chapter on the thorough adoption of bodhicitta has (two parts): the explanation of the text and listing the name of the chapter.

**The explanation of the text**

[36] The first (part) has three (subdivisions): (1) the preparation, the preliminary teachings; (2) the main part, making the commitment; and (3) the conclusion, generating joy about oneself and about others.

**The preparation, the preliminary teachings**

[37] Of these, the first, the preparation, the preliminary teachings, has two (parts): (1) gathering the accumulations and (2) mind-training.

**Gathering the accumulations**

[38] From these two, the first: In regard to gathering the accumulations (of merit) there are eight sections. From these (eight), the first four (sections) have been explained in the second chapter. What will be explained here are (the latter four sections): (1) the section on rejoicing, (2) the section on requesting to turn the wheel of dharma, (3) the section on supplicating not to enter into nirvāṇa, and (4) the section on dedicating the roots of virtue for the benefit of others.

**The section on rejoicing**

[39] From these four, (now) the first: Among the virtues of a lesser, middling and greater person, the virtue of a lesser person, (virtue) that concords with (worldly) merit, has two (aspects): (rejoicing in) the cause and (rejoicing in) the fruition.

> inserted root text: stanza 1
>
> Gladly do I rejoice
> In the virtues of all beings who are relieved
> From the sufferings of the lower realms and
> (Gladly do I rejoice) in those who dwell in happiness (though) infused with suffering.

[40] rgyu la yi-rang-ba ni / 'khor-ba'i-**sems-can** gang-su-yang rung-ba **kun-gyi** dmyal-ba sogs **ngan-song-gi-sdug-bsngal** myong zhing ngal-bas gdung-ba las re-zhig mtho-ris su **ngal-bso'i** te bso-ba'i-lha-mi'i bde-ba'i 'bras-bu-'thob-pa'i rgyu bsam-pa nges-'byung dang byang-sems / nyams-len bdag-med kyis ma zin-pa'i dge-bcu la-sogs pa'i **dge-ba-**bsgrub-pa **dang** /

[41] 'bras-bu la yi-rang-ba ni ngan-song-gsum la ltos na lha-mi rnams gnas-skabs bde yang khyab-pa-'du-byed-kyi-sdug-bsngal / sdug-bsngal-gyi-sdug-bsgnal / 'gyur-ba'i-sdug-bsngal ste gsum ci-rigs-pa dang ldan-pas **sdug-bsngal-can dag** mngon-mtho lha-mi'i-gnas su gzugs dang lang-tsho thob dang mnga'-thang /snyan-pa dang grags-pa nor dang longs-spyod sogs phun-sum-tshogs-pa'i **bder** ste bde-bar-**gnas**-pa rang-rang gi sngon-gyi-dge-ba'i 'bras-bu la spyod-pa rnams la phrag-dog dang 'gran-sems la-sogs-pa med-par snying-nas **dga'-bas rjes-su-yi-rang ngo** //

> inserted root text: stanza 2
>
> byang chub rgyur gyur dge bsags pa //
> de la rjes su yi rang ngo //
> lus can 'khor ba'i sdug bsngal las //
> nges par thar la yi rang ngo //

[42] skyes-bu-'bring-gi-dge-ba theg-dman thar-pa-cha-mthun la'ang rgyu-'bras gnyis las / rgyu la /

> zad dang mi skye shes-pa yi //
> ye-shes byang-chub zhes brjod de //

zhes gsungs-pa ltar

[43] nyan-rang-gi-**byang-chub** kyi **rgyur-gyur**-pa'i **dge**-ba nges-'byung dang bdag-med kyi rtsis-zin-pa'i dge-ba gang **bsags-pa de la** dga'-bas **rjes-su-yi-rang ngo** //

[40] Rejoicing in the cause: (Gladly do I rejoice) **in the** accomplished **virtues of all** and any of the saṃsāric **beings**, such as the ten virtuous actions, though not embraced by the motivation of renunciation and bodhicitta, or by practice and (realization of) egolessness, but (that are still) the cause for reaching the blissful fruitions of men and gods, those who are restful, meaning **who are relieved** for a while in the higher realms **from** being tormented by the fatigue and the experience of **the sufferings of the lower realms**, such as the hells and others,

[41] **And** rejoicing in the fruition: **Gladly do I rejoice** from my heart, without jealousy and competitiveness, **in** those who enjoy the fruition of their personal former virtue, **who dwell** in happiness, that is to say **in** the **happiness** of perfect conditions such as the achievement of (a beautiful) body and youth, of power, fame, repute, wealth and enjoyments, in the higher realms, the places of gods and men. Though the places of gods and men have temporary happiness if you compare them with the three lower realms, they are (still) **infused with suffering** because they are endowed with all three (types of suffering): the omnipresent suffering in the making, the suffering of change and the suffering upon suffering.

> inserted root text: stanza 2
>
> I rejoice in that gathering of virtue
> That is the cause for the enlightenment (of śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas).
> I rejoice in (all) sentient beings who are definitely liberated
> From the misery of saṃsāra.

[42] The virtue of a middling person, (virtue) that concords with the liberation of the lower vehicle, has two aspects: (Rejoicing in) the cause and (rejoicing in) the fruition. From these, concerning the cause, it is said:

> This is called enlightenment, the wisdom of
> What has ceased and will never be born again.

[43] Gladly **I rejoice in that gathering of** whatever virtue is embraced by renunciation and egolessness, **virtue that is the cause for the enlightenment** of the śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas.

[44] 'bras-bu **lus-can** sems-can gang-zhig khams-gsum-**'khor-ba'i-sdug-bsngal** skye-rga-na-'chi sogs **las nges-par-thar** te slob-pa rgyun-zhugs phyir-'ong phyir-mi-'ong dang mi-slob-pa dgra-bcom-pa'i go-'phang-thob ste khrag-dang-mchi-ma'i-rgya-mtsho ni skam / rus-pa'i-ri-bo ni bcom / gser dang bong-ba mnyam-pas spangs-rtogs-kyi-yon-tan dran nas dang / ston-pa thugs-rje-can gyis bstan dang ston-pa gnyis-kar bzhag cing bsngags-pa'i dam-pa'i-chos 'dul-ba dang mjal-ba 'di yang de-dag gi drin yin-pas sku-drin-dran nas de **la** dad-pas **yi-rang ngo** //

> inserted root text: stanza 3
>
> skyob pa rnams kyi byang chub dang //
> rgyal sras sa la'ang yi rang ngo //

[45] skyes-bu-chen-po'i-dge-ba theg-chen thar-pa-cha-mthun la 'bras-bu dang rgyu gnyis las 'bras-bu la /

[46] mthar-thug-gi-'bras-bu 'gro-ba thams-cad kyi **skyob-pa** sangs-rgyas **rnams kyi** spangs-rtogs-kyi-yon-tan ma-lus-pa rdzogs-pa'i-**byang-chub**-chen-po yon-tan-rgya-mtsho'i-bdag-nyid **dang** / gnas-skabs-kyi-'bras-bu **rgyal-sras** byang-sems rnams kyis **sa**-dang-po-rab-tu-dga'-ba thob-pa nas bcu-pa-chos-kyi-sprin gyi bar kyi sa-lam-gyi-spangs-ba-dang-rtogs-pa'i-yon-tan rnams **la'ang** shes nas **yi-rang ngo** //

> inserted root text: stanza 4
>
> sems can thams cad bde mdzad pa'i //
> thugs bskyed dge ba rgya mtsho dang //
> sems can phan par mdzad pa la //
> dga' bas rjes su yi rang ngo //

[47] rgyu la bsam-pa nam-mkha'-dang-mnyam-pa'i-**sems-can thams-cad bde**-ba-mchog sangs-rgyas kyi go-'phang la 'god-par-**mdzad-pa'i** byang-chub-mchog-tu-**thugs-bskyed**-pa'i **dge-ba rgya-mtsho** lta-bu **dang** / sbyor-ba pha-rol-tu-phyin-pa-drug la bslab-pas **sems-can** thams-cad la **phan**-pa dpag-tu-med-**par mdzad**-pa'i dge-ba phan-yon-le'u las bshad-**pa** lta-bu rgya-chen zhing rgyun-ring-ba nam-mkha' lta-bu **la** phrag-dog-med-par snying-nas **dga'-bas rjes-su-yi-rang ngo** //

[44] **I rejoice** with devotion **in** the fruition, **in** all **sentient beings who are definitely liberated from** birth, old age, sickness, death and so forth, from **the sufferings** of the three realms **of saṃsāra**, in (all) those who have reached the levels of stream-enterers, once-returners, non-returners on the path of learning, and the level of an arhat on the path of no more learning—remembering their qualities of renunciation and realization since for them the oceans of blood and tears have dried up, the mountains of bones have been defeated and gold and stones are the same—and (I rejoice) remembering their kindness, since due to their kindness we can still meet the vinaya, the sublime and praiseworthy dharma that (our) compassionate teacher left behind as both doctrine and teacher.

> inserted root text: stanza 3
>
> I rejoice in the enlightenment of the protectors
> And also in the levels of the sons of the victors.

[45] The virtue of the greater kind of person, that concords with the liberation of the Mahāyāna, has two aspects: (Rejoicing in) the fruition and (rejoicing in) the cause.

[46] From these, (first rejoicing in) the fruition: **I rejoice** knowingly **in** the ultimate fruition, in the essence of oceanic qualities of **the** great and perfect **enlightenment**, in all the qualities of overcoming and realization **of** the buddhas, **the protectors** of all beings, **and also in** the temporary fruitions, in the qualities of overcoming and realization, **the levels** and paths that **the sons of the victors**, the bodhisattvas, have attained—from the first level (called) 'joy' until the tenth level (called) 'dharma-cloud'.

> inserted root text: stanza 4
>
> With gladness I rejoice
> In the oceanic virtues of directing the mind (toward supreme enlightenment),
> Establishing all sentient beings in happiness,
> And in the deeds that benefit sentient beings.

[47] (Rejoicing in) the cause: **With gladness I rejoice** from my heart and without jealousy, **in** the motivation, in **the oceanic virtues of directing the mind** toward supreme enlightenment by **establishing all sentient beings** equal to the reaches of space on the level of buddhahood, supreme **happiness**; **and** (I rejoice) **in** the application, the virtues—explained in the chapter on the benefits (of bodhicitta) as being vast, constant and space-like—**the deeds that** immeasurably **benefit** all **sentient beings,** the trainings in the six transcendental perfections.

[48] de-ltar yi-rang-byas na de'i dge-ba las che-ba rang-nyid kyis 'thob-pa'i tshul sngon rgyal-po-gsal-rgyal gyis sangs-rgyas 'khor-bcas spyan-drangs te bsnyen-bkur-byas-pa la dbul-mos yi-rang-byas-pa las bsngo-ba dbul-mo la mdzad-par gsungs-pa lta-bu dang / phan-yon yang / mdo-sdud-par /

> stong-gsum ri-rab srang la gzhal-bas tshad-bzung rung //
> rjes-su-yi-rang dge-ba de ni de-lta min //

zhes-pa ltar ro //

[49] rjes-su-yi-rang 'di ni nga-rgyal dang ngoms-chos su mi 'gro zhing tshegs-chung la bsod-nams rgya-chen-po myur-du 'grub-pa'i man-ngag yin-pas gzhan gyi dge-rtsa mthong thos gang yod la bsgom-par-bya dgos gsungs //

[50] gnyis-pa ni / sngon bdag-cag-gi-ston-pa byang-chub-shing drung-du mngon-par-rdzogs-par-sangs-rgyas-pa na /

> zab zhi spros-bral 'od-gsal 'dus-ma-byas //
> bdud-rtsi lta-bu'i chos shig bdag gis rnyed //
> su la bstan kyang go-bar-mi-'gyur-bas //
> mi smra nags-'dab nyid du gnas-par-bya //

[51] zhes chos-kyi-che-ba sogs dgos-pa'i-rab du-mas zhag-bdun-phrag-bdun du chos mi gsung-ba'i tshul-gnang-ba la / lha'i-dbang-po-brgya-byin gyis dung-dkar-g.yas-su-'khyil-ba dang / tshangs-pas gser-gyi-'khor-lo-rtsibs-stong-dang-ldan-pa sogs phul te nyid kyi chos tshigs-bzhi re'i ched-du sku lus la lcags-kyi-gzer-bu stong btab-pa dang / lus la mar-me stong spar-ba sogs dka'-ba dpag-tu-med-pas bsgrubs te da-lta dam-pa'i-chos-kyi-mdzod brnyes-pa'i dus-su chos-kyi-'khor-lo ci'i-phyir mi bksor zhes yang-dang-yang-du chos-kyi-'khor-lo-bskor-bar-gsol-ba-btab-pas /

[48] If you rejoice in this way, you obtain greater (virtue) than the virtue of the one (undertaking the virtuous act). It is said that in the past an old beggar woman rejoiced in (the fact) that King Prasenajit invited the Buddha and his entourage and served them, and therefore (the Buddha) dedicated (the virtue of this event) to the old beggar woman. Again, the benefits (of rejoicing are stated) in the *Sañcaya-sūtra*:

> It might be possible to quantify by measuring in ounces 'the third order of a thousand (world systems)' with Mount Sumeru.
> But the virtue of rejoicing cannot (be measured).

[49] Rejoicing does not serve pride or pretentiousness but is an instruction for accomplishing swiftly vast merit with little hardship. Therefore, it is said that you must meditate (on rejoicing) whenever you see or hear about any roots of virtue (done) by others.

**The section on requesting to turn the wheel of dharma**

[50] Second: Previously, when our teacher reached actual and complete enlightenment in front of the bodhi-tree, (he spoke):

> I have found a nectar-like dharma
> Which is profound, peaceful, free from complexity, luminous and uncompounded.
> To whomever I teach it, it will not be understood.
> Therefore, I will remain in the forest without teaching.

[51] Thus, for various reasons, such as the magnificence of the dharma and so forth, he gave the appearance of not teaching the dharma for seven weeks. Śakra, king of the gods, offered a white conch curling to the right, and Brahma offered a golden wheel with one thousand spokes and the like, and, beseeching him again and again to turn the wheel of dharma, said, "For every four-line stanza of the dharma, you endured unfathomable hardship such as having your body pierced by a thousand iron nails or having a thousand candles burning on your body.[6] Now, as you have obtained the treasury of the sublime dharma, why would you not turn the wheel of dharma?"

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[6] See *mdzangs blun*, story 1, pages 1-26

> inserted root text: stanza 5
>
> phyogs rnams kun gyi sangs rgyas la //
> thal mo sbyar te gsol ba ni //
> sems can sdug bsngal mun 'thoms la //
> chos kyi sgron me sbar du gsol //

[52] tshangs-pa ma-gha-dha yi sems-can rnams /
rna-bar ldan zhing dad dang shes-rab ldan //
mi 'tshe 'du-shes rtag-tu chos nyan-pa //
de-dag rnams la bdud-rtsi'i-sgo-dbye'o //

[53] zhes gsungs te chos-'khor-bskor-ba ltar // **phyogs**-bcu-po **rnams** na dus-gsum **kun**-tu bzhugs-pa nyid **gyi sangs-rgyas** bcom-ldan-'das mkhyen-pas gzigs shing brtse-bas dgongs-par-mdzad-pas bdag lkog-tu-ma-gyur-pa rnams **la** bdag-nyid kyis gser-gyi-'khor-lo la-sogs-pa phul-bar-mos te lus **thal-mo-sbyar te** ngag gis zhu zhing **gsol-ba ni**

[54] **sems-can sdug-bsngal** sna-tshogs kyis gdung shing gnas dang gnas-min gyi khyad-par / lam dang lam-min gyi dbe-ba blang-dor-gyi-gnas mi shes-pas ma-rig-pa'i **mun**-pa-stug-por-**'thoms**-pa rnams **la** rang-rang gi skal-ba dang mthun-par dam-pa'i-**chos-kyi-sgron-me** rab-tu-'bar-ba lta-bu **sbar** nas mi shes-pa'i mun-pa-bsal te / ye-shes-kyi-snang-ba yang-dag-pa bstan-**tu-gsol** zhes gsol-ba-btab-pas chos-'khor-bskor-bar zhal-gyis-bzhes-par bsam mo //

[55] chos-'khor-bskor-bar-bskul na skye-ba tshe-rabs thams-cad du log-lta'i-lta-ngan rgyud la mi skye-ba dang / dam-pa'i-chos-kyi-snang-ba dang mi 'bral-ba'i dgos-pa yod do gsungs /

> inserted root text: stanza 6
>
> rgyal ba mya ngan 'da' bzhed la //
> thal mo sbyar te gsol ba ni //
> 'gro 'di ldongs par mi 'god cing //
> bskal pa grangs med bzhugs par gsol //

> inserted root text: stanza 5
>
> With folded hands I beseech
> The buddhas of all directions:
> "I supplicate you to shine the lamp of dharma
> For (all) those sentient beings who are bewildered in the darkness of misery."

[52] (Buddha said):

> Brahma! For those beings of Magadha
> Who are endowed with ears, faith and knowledge,
> Who do not harm (others) and whose intention is to always listen to the dharma,
> For them I will open the nectar-like gateway.

[53] Having said this, (the Buddha) turned the wheel of the dharma. In the same way, I respectfully offer a golden wheel and other (objects); my body **with folded hands, I** request with my voice and **beseech the buddhas**, the bhagavans, who dwell in **all** three times and in the ten **directions**, those who look upon me with knowledge and who regard me with compassion because I am not hidden from them:

[54] **"For those beings who are bewildered in the** dense **darkness** of ignorance, who are tormented by various kinds **of misery** because they do not know the distinction between what is correct and what is incorrect, the difference between the right and the wrong path, and the key points of what to do and what to avoid, **I supplicate you to shine the lamp of** the sublime **dharma** most brightly, in accordance with the capacities of each and every one, to dispel the darkness of ignorance and to teach the genuine light of wisdom." While you thus beseech them, think that they accept, saying, "I agree to turn the wheel of dharma."

[55] If one requests (the buddhas) to turn the wheel of dharma, the purpose is said to be that in all (future) lifetimes misconceptions of wrong views will not arise in one's mind and one will be inseparable from the light of the sublime dharma.

**The section on supplicating not to enter into nirvāṇa**

> inserted root text: stanza 6
>
> With folded hands I beseech
> The victors who wish to pass into nirvāṇa:
> "I supplicate you to remain for countless aeons
> And not to leave these beings in blindness."

[56] gsum-pa ni sngon bdag-cag-gi-ston-pa la dge-bsnyen-tsun-tas mya-ngan-las-mi-'da'-bar-gsol-ba-btab-pas sku-tshe zla-ba gsum du bsrings-ba ltar phyogs-bcu'i-zhing na bzhugs-pa'i sangs-rgyas rnams nges-pa'i-don-du **rgyal-ba** rnams mya-ngan-las-mi-'da' yang gdul-bya'i mdzad-pa mthar-phyin nas dgos-dbang gis **mya-ngan**-las-**'da'**-ba'i-tshul-ston-par-**bzhed**-pa rnams **la** lus **thal-mo-sbyar te** ngag gis zhu zhing **gsol-ba ni 'gro**-ba mtha'-las-pa **'di** rnams blang-dor-gyi-mig gti-mug gi ling-tog-gis-long-ba'am **ldongs-par mi 'god cing** / blang-dor-gyi-gnas bsal-bar-bgyi-ba'i slad-du **bskal-pa-grangs-med** mang-po'i bar-du mya-ngan-las-mi-'da'-bar **bzhugs-par gsol**-ba-'debs shing mya-ngan-mi-'da'-bar bzhugs-par zhal-gyis-bzhes-par yang bsam mo //

[57] bzhi-pa ni / spyir theg-chen gyi bsngo-ba byang-chub chen-po 'thob phyir bsngo-ba yin yang 'dir rang-rgyud la byang-chub-kyi-sems skye-ba la tshad-med-pa-bzhi'am snying-rje'i blo-sbyongs dgos te de yi rtsa-bar snying-rje 'dod // ces-pa ltar yin-pas 'dir bsngo-ba dang snying-rje phyogs-mthun du bstan-pa yin nam synams /

> inserted root text: stanza 7
>
> de ltar 'di dag kun byas te //
> dge ba bdag gis bsags pa gang //
> des ni sems can thams cad kyi //
> sdug bsngal thams cad bsal bar shog /

[58] **de-ltar** gong-du bshad-pa'i yan-lag bdun-po **'di-dag kun byas**-pa'i dge-ba 'dis mtshon **te dge-ba bdag gis** dus-gsum du byas shing **bsags-pa gang**-yin-pa **de'i ni**[7] spyir nam-mkha'-dang-mnyam-pa'i-**sems-can-thams-cad kyi** 'khor-ba dang ngan-song-gi-**sdug-bsngal** ma-lus-pa **thams-cad bsal zhing** byang-**bar-shog**-cig ces bsam mo //

> inserted root text: stanza 8
>
> 'gro ba nad pa ji srid du //
> nad sos gyur gyi bar du ni //
> sman dang sman pa nyid dag dang //
> de yi nad g.yog byed par shog /

[7] de'i ni or des ni (???)

[56] Third: Earlier, when the lay practitioner Cunda requested our teacher not to pass into nirvāṇa, (the Buddha) prolonged his life for three months. Likewise, although with regard to the definitve meaning, the buddhas who dwell in the buddha fields of the ten directions, **the victors,** never pass into nirvāṇa; yet, because they have completed their activity for those to be tamed, they **wish** to display the manner of passing into nirvāṇa. (All) those, my body **with folded hands, I** request with my voice and **beseech**, "In order that **these** boundless **beings are not left in blindness**—their eyes (of knowledge of) what to do and what to avoid being blinded by the cataract of ignorance—**and** (in order) that you clarify the key points of what to do and what to avoid, **I supplicate you to remain for** many **countless aeons** and not enter into nirvāṇa." Imagine that (the Buddha) accepts saying, "I will remain and not enter into nirvāṇa."

**The section on dedicating the merit for the benefit of others**

[57] Fourth: Although in general, dedication in Mahāyāna is dedication so that (all sentient beings) attain great enlightenment, here one must train one's mind in the four immeasurables and in compassion for bodhicitta to take birth in one's mind-stream. (As it is stated in Sūtrālaṃkāra Maitreya), "Compassion is said to be the very root of this (bodhicitta)." Since it is explained in this way, (I, Khenpo Kunpal) wonder, "Here, are (stanzas 7 through 10) presenting dedication and compassion to be almost identical?"

> inserted root text: stanza 7
>
> Thus by having performed all these (seven sections mentioned above),
> And through whatever virtue I have amassed,
> May all the misery of all sentient beings
> Be cleared away.

[58] Imagine: "**Thus**, led by the virtue of **having performed all these** seven sections explained above, **and through whatever virtue I have** practiced or **amassed** throughout the three times, **may**, in general, **all the misery**—without exception—of saṃsāra and the three lower realms **of all sentient beings** equal to the reaches of space, **be cleared away** and purified."

> inserted root text: stanza 8
>
> For as long as beings are ill
> And until they are cured of their diseases,
> May I become their medicine and their physician
> And may I become their nurse.

[59] bye-brag-tu snying-rje'i-gnas **'gro-ba** sems-can skye-dgu rnams kyi ngan-spyod mi-dge-ba'i dbang gis lha rnams pham zhing lha-min rnams rgyal te de'i kha-rlangs las nad-sprin-dmar-po las gnyan-rigs-bco-brgyad sogs kyi **nad** sna-tshogs kyis gdung **zhing** mnar-ba nyams-thag-**pa rnams ji-srid-du nad** las grol zhing **sos**-par-**gyur gyi bar-du ni** bdag-**nyid** nad zhi-bar-byed-pa'i **sman**-bzang-po dper-na sngon rgyal-po-padma nya ro-hi-ta'i skye-ba-bzhes nas nad zhi-bar-byas-pa dang gzhan srog-chags des-pa la-sogs-pa lta-bu **dang** / spyir sman-gyi-rnam-pa gang ji-snyed-pa thams-cad sangs-rgyas dang byang-sems rnams kyi thugs-rje'i-byin-rlabs las byung-ba ( ???) yang yin no //

[60] sman de ston cing sbyin-pa'i **sman-pa** khye'u-chu-'bebs la-sogs-pa lta-bu **nyid dag dang** / bdag-cag-gi-ston-pas dge-slong nad-pa'i lus mi-gtsang-bas gos-pa smyug-mas-brad cing stan brje-ba sogs mdzad cing nad-g.yog-byed dgos-par bcas-pa'ang mdzad-pas na **de yi nad-g.yog-byed-par-shog**-cig ces smon zhing dngos-su nad-pa yal-bar-mi-'dor zhing nad-g.yog la-sogs-pa byed dgos so //

> inserted root text: stanza 9
>
> zas dang skom gyi char phab ste //
> bkres dang skom pa'i gnod pa bsal //
> mu ge'i bskal pa bar ma'i tshe //
> bdag ni zas dang skom du gyur //

[61] 'jig-rten-gyi-khams na bza'-btung-med-pa'i-sdug-bsngal gyis mnar-ba rnams la ro-brgya'i-**zas dang** bdud-rtsi'i-skom gyi **char**-rgyun mi-'chad-par **phab ste bkres dang skom-pa'i gnod-pa** mtha'-dag **bsal** nas rab-tu-tshim-pa'i bde-ba la 'khod-par-gyur-cig // **mu-ge'i-bskal-par-bar-ma'i** ste gab-tshe-ba dang / thur-mas-tshol-ba dang / rus-gong-dkar-po-pa rnams 'byung-ba de'i-**tshe bdag ni zas dang skom** phun-sum-tshogs-par gyur te bkres-skom ma-lus-pa zhi-bar-byed-pa nyid **du gyur** cig //

[59] In particular, **for as long as beings**, the objects of compassion, the miserable ones, **are** tormented and pained by various **ill**nesses—such as (those caused by) the eighteen classes of spirits (manifesting) from the red cloud of illness (that arises) from the breath of the (asuras) when the gods have been defeated and the asuras have been victorious because of the power of all sentient beings' bad conduct and non-virtuous actions—**and until they are** freed and **cured of their diseases**, **may I become their** noble **medicine** that pacifies their diseases, for example like (Buddha Śākyamuni who) previously, as King Padma taking rebirth as the Rohita fish, pacified sickness, saved other beings and so forth.[8] In general, all existing forms of medicine are born from the compassionate blessing power of the Buddha and the bodhisattvas.

[60] (May I become) **their physician,** who teaches and gives them medicine, just like 'Son Rainfall' (???) and others. **And** may I become **their nurse**, as our teacher (Buddha Śākyamuni) who cleaned with a bamboo stick the body of a sick monk[9] who had sullied himself with excrement, changed his bedding and the like and acted and served as his nurse because it was necessary. Thus one should pray, "**May I become their nurse**,"and actually serve as a nurse and not let sick people waste away.

> inserted root text: stanza 9
>
> May a rain of food and drink descend
> To clear away the ills of thirst and hunger.
> During the intermediate aeon of famine
> May I myself become food and drink.

[61] For those in this world tormented by the suffering of having nothing to eat or drink, **may a**n unceasing **rain of food** endowed with one hundred flavors **and drinks** of nectar **descend to clear away** all **the ills of thirst and hunger**, and to establish (them) in the most satisfying happiness. **During the intermediate aeon of famine**—when (the periods of) 'the hidden eaters', 'the spoon eaters' and 'the bare bones eaters' arise—**may I myself become** the perfect **food and drink**, pacifying all thirst and hunger.

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[8] See *Words of My Perfect Teacher*, page 230-231; *gtam rgyud*, 530-533, rgyal po padma'i gtam rgyud.

[9] dge slong; skr. bhikṣu

[62] des-mtshon te nad-kyi-bskal-pa la sman sogs dang mtshon-gyi-bskal-pa la bdag gi mthus mtshon-cha'i-char me-tog-gi-char du bsgyur-nus-par-gyur-cig ces kyang bya'o // deng-sang rang-res nad-mtshon-mu-ge'i-bskal-pa-bar-ma de-dang-der mi skye-ba'i ched-du dkon-mchog-rin-po-che'i-zhing la rim-par sman-gyi-rigs rnams dang mtshon-cha'i-rigs dang dge-'dun-pa sogs la zas-skom phul ste rang-gzhan sems-can thams-cad de-dang-der mi skye-ba'i smon-lam-gdab-par-bya dgos gsungs //

> inserted root text: 10
>
> sems can phongs shing dbul ba la //
> bdag ni mi zad gter gyur te //
> yo byad mkho dgu sna tshogs su //
> mdun na nye bar gnas gyur cig /

[63] 'jig-rten **sems-can** gang kha zas-skom dang rgyab gos dang lag nor-longs-spyod kyis **phongs shing dbul-ba rnams la bdag ni** zas 'dod-pa la zas dang skom 'dod-pa la skom la-sogs-pa gang 'dod-pa **mi-zad**-pa'i-**gter**-chen-por **gyur te** zas gos longs-spyod sogs ci 'dod-pa'i **yo-byad mkho-dgu sna-tshogs**-pa rnams **su** rang-rang gi **mdun-na nye-bar-gnas**-par-**gyur-cig** ces so //

[64] gnyis-pa blo-sbyang-ba la blo-sbyang-ba-dngos dang / de'i 'thad-pa-dgod-pa / lus-bye-brag-tu-gtong-ba / blo-sbyong-gi-'bras-bu gzhan-don la bsngo-ba dang bzhi las //

[65] dang-po ni / byang-chub-kyi-sems rang-rgyud la skye-ba'i rgyu blo-sbyang-ba 'di-nyid yin-pas rang-'dod-kyi-'khri-ba ma bcad na gzhan-phan-gyi-bsam-pa mi skye-bas na dang-po blo-sbyang-ba gal-che ste //

[62] As thus indicated, also (pray): "May I be able to transform myself into medicine during the aeon of disease, and during the aeon of weapons may I have the power to transform the rain of weapons into a rain of flowers." Nowadays, in order that we not be reborn in any of the intermediate aeons of disease, weapons or famine, it is said that we should successively offer (various) kinds of medicine and (different) kinds of weapons to the field of the precious three jewels, as well as food and drink to the saṃgha, while making aspirations that neither we nor other beings take rebirth in any of (these aeons).

> inserted root text: stanza 10
>
> May I become an inexhaustible treasure
> For sentient beings who are poor and destitute
> And may all the various things they might need
> Be readily available to them.[10]

[63] **For** all **sentient beings** in this world **who are poor and destitute** of food and drink for their mouths, clothing for their backs, and wealth and riches for their hands, **may I become a** great and **inexhaustible treasure**, whatever they want—food for those who want food, drink for those who want drink and so forth. **And may all the various things they might need**, whatever they might wish for, food, clothing, riches and so forth, **be readily available to** each of **them**.

**Mind-training**

[64] Second, mind-training has four points: (1) the actual mind-training, (2) establishing its reasoning, (3) giving one's body in a specific way and (4) dedicating the fruition of one's mind-training for the benefit of others.

**The actual mind-training**

[65] First: The cause for bodhicitta to take birth in one's mind is exactly this mind-training. Consequently, without cutting the clinging to your self-centered wishes, the motivation to benefit others cannot be born. Therefore, mind-training is of great importance in the beginning.

[10] Literally 'remain closely before them'.

[66] de-yang ji-skad-du /

> sems-can-khams ni dpag-med la //
> phan 'dod de ni de-'dra'o //
> gzhan-phan las la mthu-med kyang //
> de yi bsam-pa rtag-tu bya //
> gang la bsam-pa de yod pa //
> de ni de la don-gyis zhugs //

[67] zhes gsungs-pa ltar gzhan-don-du bdag-tu-'dzin-pa'i-gzhi-gsum btang nas blo-sbyangs-pa ste las-dang-po-pas dngos-su-sbyor-bas mi gtong ste / mi nus der brtson de yi gzugs-brnyan yin // zhes gsungs-pa ltar ro /

[68] des-na blo-thog-nas de gsum gzhan la gtong-ba'i gtong-sems goms na sbyin-pa'i-phar-phyin yongs-su-rdzogs-par-'gyur la dngos-su cung-zad sbyin-rgyu-med-kyang 'gal-ba-med la / gtong-sems med-par sbyin-pa-byed-pa sogs ni gzugs-brnyan tsam yin-pas gtong-sems la goms-pa shin-tu-gces so //

[69] yongs-su-bzung-ba'i-gzhi-gsum-po de las lus gtso-che ste lus la bdag gam bdag-gir-bzung nas 'di-phyi kun-tu bde-ba'i phyir-du rgyu-longs-spyod dang dge-ba la bdag-tu-'dzin-pa yin-pas lus la zhan-pa-gcod-pa gnad-che'o //

> inserted root text: stanza 11
>
> lus dang de bzhin longs spyod dang //
> dus gsum dge ba thams cad kyang //
> sems can kun gyi don sgrub phyir //
> phongs pa med par btang bar bya //

[66] As it is said:

> Because the number of beings is boundless,
> The wish to benefit them must be equally so.
> Even if one's activities for the welfare of others have no power,
> One must still always maintain this motivation.
> Whoever has such a motivation
> Is (already) truly engaged in this (boundless merit).

[67] According to this statement, for the welfare of others you should train your mind by giving away the three bases of ego-clinging. A beginner, however, should not give them away in actual application. Attempting to do so while lacking the ability would be a (mere) imitation. Thus it is explained.

[68] Consequently, accustoming yourself to the generous motivation of sacrificing[11] within your mind these three (bases of ego-clinging) for (the sake of) others will lead to the perfection of transcendental generosity. Even if you had not in actuality the smallest (thing) to offer, you would still not be contravening (your bodhisattva precepts). On the other hand, practicing generosity and the like without a generous attitude is nothing but a mere imitation (of genuine generosity). Therefore, accustoming yourself to a generous attitude is most crucial.

[69] Among the three bases of possessiveness, the body is the most important. Clinging to your body as 'me' or 'mine', you identify yourself with (your) material wealth, enjoyments and virtue for the sake of happiness in this and all future lifetimes. Therefore, cutting the attachment to your body is a major key point.

> inserted root text: stanza 11
>
> My body and likewise my enjoyments,
> And even all my virtue of the three times,
> I surrender without any sense of loss,
> In order to accomplish the welfare of all sentient beings.

[11] We have used the words 'to surrender', 'to sacrifice', 'to give' or 'to give away' interchangably in translation for the Tibetan verb gtong ba.

[70] des-nas dngos-po bdag gis gces-par-bzung-ba'i **lus** 'di **dang de-bzhin**-du nor dang zas gos sogs **longs-spyod** thams-cad **dang dus-gsum** du bsags-pa'i **dge**-ba'i-rtsa-**ba thams-cad kyang** ched-du-bya-ba **sems-can** ma-lus-pa **kun gyi** phan-bde'i-**don bsgrub**-par-bya-ba'i **phyir** gtong-tshul ser-snas **phangs**-pa dang lan dang rnam-smin la re-**ba-med-par** snying-thag-pa-nas **btang-bar-bya** zhes ngag-gis-brjod cing don sems la gsal-bar yang-yang bsam dgos te /

[71] 'di ni gdams-ngag-gi-gnad srid-pa'i-rtsa-ba bdag-tu-'dzin-pa'i-'gon-po yul-med de[12] bdag-med-stong-pa-nyid dmigs-med-snying-rje'i rtsi dang ma bral-ba'i sgo-nas sgyu-ma lta-bu'i sems-can yongs-su mi gtong-ba'i lam-mchog-tu-gyur-pas lus sogs la gces-'dzin-gyi-zhen-pa'i-blo nam skyes kyi dus-su de-dang-de thad-ka-thad-kar nas gdong-bzlog-kho-na-byas-nas gnyan-sa ri-khrod sogs su 'jigs-skrag la-sogs-pa ci-byung tshe gzhi-gsum-po gzhan la btang zin-pa yin-pas gces-par-'dzin-pa'i dngos-po ci-yang-med-par bsam-pa tsam-gyis sems-kyi-khur-phog-pa ltar blo yang khyol-ler bde-cham-mer song nas

[72] de-ka'i ngang du bzhag la slar bdag-'dzin skye-bar-gyur na lus dang de-bzhin longs-spyod sogs ngag-nas-brjod cing sems kyis lus la-sogs-pa thams-cad gcan-gzan la-sogs-pa gzugs-can dang gzugs-med 'dre-srin-po sogs ma-rungs-ba rnams kyis sha-khyer zhing khrag-'thung longs-spyod hab-thob-kyis-khur-bar bsam-pa ste phaṭ brjod dam ma brjod kyang 'di ni blo-sbyong yin la sbyin-pa yang yin / gcod-kyi-don yang 'di-las-lhag-pa-med de /

> gnyan-sa ri-khrod 'grim-pa phyi-yi-gcod //
> phung-po gzan-du-bskyur-ba nang-gi-gcod //
> bdag-'dzin rtsad-nas-gcod-pa don-gyi-gcod //

ces gsungs-pa ltar ro //

[73] des-na 'di las gal-che-ba gzhan med do // bslab-btus las //

> gang gis ltung-bar mi 'gyur-ba'i //
> gnad-kyi-gnad rnams 'di rigs-bya //
> bdag gi lus dang longs-spyod dang /
> dge-ba dus-gsum bskyed-pa rnams //
> sems-can kun la btang-ba dang //
> de bsrung dag dang spel ba'o //

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[12] B: yul phud de

[70] Therefore, you should recite with your voice and clearly bring to mind again and again the meaning (of the following): "This **body**, this material object which I hold dear, **and likewise** all **my enjoyments** such as riches, food, clothing and so forth, **and even all** the roots of virtue that I have gathered throughout **the three times**, **I surrender** from the depth of my heart, in this (unique) way of giving, **without any sense of loss** due to stinginess, and without any hope for reward or karmic results, **in order to accomplish the welfare**, the benefit and happiness, **of all beings**—the object of intent—without exception."

[71] This is a key point of oral instructions, dispelling the insatiable demon of ego-clinging, the root of (saṃsāric) existence. Whenever thoughts of attachment, of cherishing your body and so forth, arise in your mind, confront them directly, one by one, through the supreme path of never forsaking illusory sentient beings, while remaining inseparable from the core [rtsi] of egoless emptiness and non-conceptual compassion. In frightening places or hermitages, at the time when fear and the like arise, the mere thought, "There is no material substance that I cherish because I have sacrificed the three bases to others," is like casting a burden from your mind. Your mind becomes relaxed and happy.

[72] While resting in this state, when ego-clinging once again arises, recite with your voice (stanza 11): "My body and likewise my enjoyments …" and so forth, and with your mind imagine that you surrender everything, your body and so on, to beasts, to physical beings such as predators, and to non-physical beings such as demons and spirits; and (imagine) that they take your flesh, drink your blood and greedily carry off all your possessions. You may or may not exclaim the (syllable) 'phaṭ'. This is mind-training as well as (the practice of) generosity. There is no greater meaning of 'the cutting' than this. As (Milarepa) said:

> Going to frightening places and hermitages is 'the outer cutting'.
> To sacrifice one's body (as food) to others is 'the inner cutting'.
> To cut ego-clinging at its root is 'the ultimate cutting'.

[73] Therefore, nothing is more important than this (practice). From the *Śikṣā-samuccaya*:

> Understand this key point among key points
> Of not falling (into saṃsāra), no matter how.
> You should surrender your body, your riches and
> The virtues you have created throughout the three times
> To all sentient beings.
> You should protect, purify and increase this (attitude of generosity).

[74] zhes-pa la-sogs-pas 'di gsum gzhan la btang-ba dang mi-mthun-phyogs bsrung-ba dang / rang-skal-gyi-dri-ma dag-par-byed-pa dang / thabs-kyis gong-nas-gong-du-spel-ba ste btang-bsrung-dag-spel-bzhi-bzhi-sbyar-bas bcu-gnyis phar-phyin-drug gi ngo-bor-bsgrub-pa dang / khyad-par-du byed-pa'i sgo-nas bstan to //

[75] de-nyid las / de-ltar lus longs-spyod gzhan la btang nas rang gi zas gos sogs yin kyang dper-na g.yog gis dpon gyi zas gos la longs-spyod-pa ltar gzhan de-dag gi don-du lus 'di 'tsho-ba'i ched-du zas gos la longs-spyod dgos kyi gzhan-du ma-byin-len du 'gyur-bar yang gsungs / gzhan la phyin nas rang-don-du spyod na sbyin 'phrog tu yang 'gyur to //

[76] gnyis-pa ni / de-ltar gtong dgos-pa'i rgyu-mtshan rigs-pas-sgrub-pa la gnyis las /

> inserted root text: stanza 12
>
> thams cad btang bas mya ngan 'da' //
> bdag blo mya ngan 'das pa bsgrub //
> thams cad gtong bar chabs gcig la //
> sems can rnams la btang ba mchog /

[77] dang-po bdag-tu-'dzin-pa'i-gzhi-gsum-po 'di **thams-cad btang-bas mya-ngan-'da'-**ba'am myang-'das-'thob-pa yin na / **bdag** sangs-rgyas kyi rjes-su-'jug cing rab-tu-byung-ba'i **blo** 'di yang **mya-ngan**-las-**'das-pa** yi go-'phang **bsgrub-pa**r 'dod-pa yin-pas gtong dgos so //

[78] 'o-na dge-bas myang-'das 'grub-pa min nam ji-ltar zhe-na / bsod-nams-dge-ba'i-tshogs kyis lam-gyi-rten mngon-mtho 'thob cing lam-bden gang-zag-gi-bdag-med dang chos-kyi-bdag-med-pa'i rtogs-pa rgyud la skye-ba'i rkyen-tsam yin la des nyon-sgrib spang-bas nyan-rang gi lhag-med-myang-'das thob tshe bud-shing zad-pa'i me'am mar-me shi-ba lta-bur 'gyur-bar 'dod-pa dang /

[74] Thus, (1) surrendering the three bases to others, (2) protecting (this practice) from what is not conducive to it, (3) purifying (this practice) from its inherent stains and (4) increasing it further and further through (various) methods, that is to say applying each of these four—(1) surrendering, (2) protecting, (3) purifying and (4) increasing—(to each of the three bases), (the *Śikṣā-samuccaya*) teaches twelve (aspects) through which to practice the essence of the six transcendental perfections as well as their individual qualities.

[75] The same (*Śikṣā-samuccaya*) also states: "Having thus surrendered your body and riches to others, your food, clothing and so forth still belong to you, but, since you must still use food and clothing to sustain this body for the benefit of others, act like a servant enjoying his employer's food and clothing. Otherwise you are taking what has not been given to you." Using for your own benefit what you have given to others is misappropriating what has been given.

**Establishing its reasoning**

[76] Second: Establishing through reasoning why giving is necessary has two (parts).

> inserted root text: stanza 12
>
> (If) suffering is transcended by giving away all,
> Then (since) my objective is to accomplish nirvāṇa—
> As I will have to surrender everything at once (anyway)—
> It is the best to give (the three bases) to sentient beings now.

[77] The first (reason): If **suffering is transcended** or nirvāṇa attained **by giving away all** the three bases of ego-clinging, **then** since **my objective**—to follow the Buddha and renounce (saṃsāra)—**is** the wish **to accomplish** the level of **nirvāṇa**, consequently I must give (all the three bases ) away.

[78] However, one might wonder: "Isn't nirvāṇa accomplished through virtue?" Through the accumulations of (worldly) merit and virtue, one can achieve the (three) higher realms, the (physical) basis for the path.[13] (Worldly merit) is simply a condition for the realization of egolessness of a personal identity and the egolessness of phenomena—(both being) the truth of the path—to take birth in one's mind. When, through this (realization) the obscuration of afflictions is overcome and nirvāṇa without remainder of the śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas is attained, it is said to be like a fire that has run out of firewood or like a butter lamp that has burned out.

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[13] The (physical) basis of the path [lam gyi rten] refers to the human body.

[79] sgrib-gnyis bag-chags dang bcas-pa spang-ba'am bral-ba'i 'bras-bu theg-chen-gyi-myang-'das kyang / de-phyir thar-pa nor-tsam zad-pa yin zhes gsungs-pa ltar sgrib-gnyis bral-ba tsam ma-gtogs gzhan sgrub-tu-med-pa dang / lam-bden yang chu-brgal zin-pa'i gzings ltar spang-par gsungs shing /

[80] des-na spyir thar-pa bsgrub-pa la bdag-'dzin gyis bcing-ba'i 'jig-rten-pa'i-dge-ba don-med-pa dang / khyad-par mthar-'bras rdzogs-byang 'thob-pa la ni 'dus-byas-kyi-dge-ba thams-cad bral dgos-pa'i phyir de ni nges-par gtong dgos so //

[81] rgyu-mtshan gnyis-pa / de-lta-na yang myang-'das ma bsgrub na gtong ci-dgos snyam na / da-lta ma btang yang 'chi-ba'i-tshe lus dang longs-spyod thams-cad dang dge-ba yang sngar zhe-sdang sogs kyis zad zin nam / min kyang rnam-smin lan-gcig myong nas zad-par-'gyur-bas na

[82] **thams-cad** don-'bras-med-par **gtong-bar chab-gcig** ste 'dra-bar nges-par 'dor-bar-'gyur-ba **la** da-lta rang la rang-dbang yod-pa'i dus-'dir **sems-can rnams la** phan-bde'i phyir **btang-ba mchog** yin te / chus-zos-su-ma-song-bar don-'bras mchog thob-pa'i phyir ro //

> inserted root text: stanza 13
>
> bdag gis lus can thams cad la //
> lus 'di ci bder byin zin gyis //
> rtag tu gsod dang smod pa'am //
> brdeg sogs ci dgar byed la rag /

[83] gsum-pa ni / khyad-par-du **bdag gis** nam-mkha'-dang-mnyam-pa'i-**lus-can**-sems-can-**thams-cad la lus 'di**-nyid **ci-bder** te gang-'dod du **byin zin**-pa yin **gyis** da ni dus-**rtag-tu** lus kyis **gsod**-pa **dang** ngag gis **smod-pa'am** / rdo dbyug gis **brdeg**-pa la-**sogs ci-dgar-byed la rag** ste ci-'dod gyis shig /

[79] Though the nirvāṇa of Mahāyāna is the fruition of having overcome or of being free from the two kinds of obscuration, together with all habitual patterns, it is as stated (in the *Sūtrālaṃkāra*): "Therefore, liberation is just the end of delusion." Besides the mere absence of the two obscurations, there is nothing other to accomplish. As is said, even the truth of the path must be left behind, just like a boat after the stream has been crossed.

[80] Consequently, for accomplishing liberation in general, worldly virtue that is fettered by ego-clinging is useless. And, concerning the attainment of the ultimate fruition, perfect enlightenment in particular, one must be free from all compounded virtue. Therefore, one definitely must give away (even one's virtue).

[81] The second reason: Though that is the case, you might think: "If I don't (even wish) to accomplish nirvāṇa, why should I give away (the three bases)?" (Answer): "If you do not surrender (the three bases) now, at the time of death (you will lose) your body and all your riches (anyway); and moreover, your virtue will be exhausted through former anger. Even if that is not the case, after you have experienced the karmic ripening (of your virtue) one time, it will be exhausted."

[82] Therefore, **as I will have to surrender**—with no purpose—**everything at once** (anyway)**,** meaning I am certain to cast off (all the three bases when I die); at this present time, while I am still in control of myself, **it is best to give** (them) **to sentient beings** for their benefit and happiness. Thus will I (eventually) achieve the supreme goal, as (this virtue) will never be lost.

**Giving one's body in a specific way**

> inserted root text: stanza 13
>
> Since I have already given this body
> To all living beings to do with whatever they like,
> They may at any time kill it, revile it,
> Beat it and so forth—whatever pleases them.

[83] Third: In particular, **since I have already given this** very **body to all living beings—** sentient beings—equal to the reaches of space, **to do with whatever they like**, meaning whatever they wish, **they may at any time kill it** physically, **revile it** verbally, **beat it** with stones and sticks **and so forth—whatever pleases them**, meaning, "Do whatever you want!"

> inserted root text: stanza 14
>
> bdag gi lus la rtse byed dam //
> co 'dri ga zha'i rgyu byed kyang //
> bdag gi lus 'di byin zin gyis //
> 'di yi kha tas ci zhig bya //

[84] de'ang **bdag gi lus la** lus kyi **rtse**-'jo sna-tshogs **byed dam** ngag gis bzang-ngan sna-tshogs kyis ci-zer lta-bas **co-'dri**-bar-byed dam mang-pos bzhad-gad dang **ga-zha'i rgyu** 'phya-smod sogs mi-'dra-ba sna-tshogs byed **kyang** rung ste **bdag gi lus 'di** gzhan sems-can thams-cad la **byin zin gyis 'di** la 'gal-spong-mthun-sgrub la-sogs-pa **yi kha-tas-ci-zhig-bya** zhes rang-dbang-ba'i-'du-shes-bkag-pa'o //

> inserted root text: stanza 15
>
> de la gnod par mi 'gyur ba'i //
> las gang yin pa'ang byed du chug /
> bdag la dmigs nas nam du yang //
> 'ga' yang don med ma gyur cig /

[85] **de**-dag **la** 'phral dang yun-du **gnod-pa**'am sdig-pa**r mi 'gyur-ba'i las**-bzang-ngan **gang-yin-pa'ang** de **byed-du-chug** ces rigs-pa'i las-la-sbyar-bar-bya'o // de-ltar las-byas-pa chud-mi-za-ba'i rgyur smon-pa **bdag la dmigs nas** dus-**nam-du-yang** sems-can **'ga'-yang** ste gcig-kyang **don-med**-pa nyid du **ma gyur cig** ces spyir-bstan nas bye-brag-tu

> inserted root text: stanza 16
>
> bdag la dmigs nas gang dag gis //
> khro 'am dad pa'i sems byung na //
> de nyid rtag tu de dag gi /
> don kun 'grub pa'i rgyur gyur cig /

> inserted root text: stanza 14
>
> Even if they toy with my body
> Or make it a source of jest and mockery,
> Since (I) have already given this body of mine (to others),
> Why should I hold it dear?

[84] **Even if they** physically **toy with my body or make it a source of** verbal **mockery**, with different kinds of ridicule, checking my response to various good and bad (words), **and** (a source of) laughter and **jest** for many, **since (I) have already given this body of mine** to others, to all sentient beings, **why should I hold it dear** by defending (myself) against accusations and trying to establish harmony? This means that (for Śāntideva) the concept of having authority over oneself has ceased.

> inserted root text: stanza 15
>
> Let them do any action to it
> That brings them no harm.
> May thinking of me
> Never be meaningless for anyone.

[85] "**Let them do any** good or bad **action to it that brings them no** temporary or long-lasting **harm** or negativity." Saying this, I will lead them to appropriate actions. (Now Śāntideva) makes an aspiration that (whatever) action (sentient beings) have done (in regard to himself) will never be in vain: "**May thinking of me never be meaningless for anyone** among sentient beings, excluding not even one." Having thus presented a general (aspiration), now (Śāntideva makes) a particular (aspiration):

> inserted root text: stanza 16
>
> If an angry or a faithful thought
> Arises in anyone who thinks of me,
> May that (thought) always be the cause
> That fulfills all (their) goals through these (skillful means).

[86] **bdag la dmigs nas** pha-rol-po **gang-dag gi** rgyud la khong-**khro**-ba'i-sems skyes te gnod-par 'dod-pa**'am** 'on te **dad-pa'i-sems byung** nas rang-don-sgrub-par 'dod **na** gang-zag **de-nyid** dus-**rtag-tu** thabs **de-dag gis** chos dang zang-zing sogs gang-'dod-pa'i-**don** thams-cad **kun 'grub-pa'i rgyur-gyur-cig** ces bsam-pa chud-mi-za-bar bstan to //

> inserted root text: stanza 17
>
> gang dag bdag la kha zer ram //
> gzhan dag gnod pa byed pa a'am //
> de bzhin phyar ga gtong yang rung //
> thams cad byang chub skal ldan gyur //

[87] sems-can **gang-dag bdag la** mdun-du dngos-su smod-pa **kha-zer ram gzhan** gang-**dag** lus dang longs-spyod la dngos-su **gnod-pa-byed-pa'am de-bzhin**-du lkog-nas 'phya-ba dang skur-ba-'debs-pa sogs phyar-ka sna-tshogs gtong yang rung de-dag **thams-cad** kyang **byang-chub**-chen-po 'thob pa'i **skal**-ba-dang-**ldan**-par **gyur**-cig ces sbyor-ba chud-mi-za-bar bstan ste /

[88] mdor-na yab-sras-mjal-ba'i-mdo las / gang-gis bdag la kha-zas sbyin-pa de-dag nye-bar-zhi-ba'i bde-ba thob-par gyur-cig ces sogs gsungs-pa ltar bdag la mthong thos dran reg dang bzang-ngan-gyi-'brel-thog-gi-sems-can thams-cad kyi 'dod-pa'i-don thams-cad 'grub cing gnas-skabs dang mthar-thug gi phan-bde ma-lus-pa 'grub-pa'i rgyur smon-pa'o //

> inserted root text: stanza 18
>
> bdag ni mgon med rnams kyi mgon //
> lam zhugs rnams kyi ded dpon dang //
> brgal 'dod rnams kyi gru dang ni //
> gzings dang zam pa nyid du gyur //

[86] "**If an angry** thought is born **in** the mind of **anyone**—any other (sentient being)—**who thinks of me** and wishes me harm; **or** if **a faithful thought arises** and he wishes to benefit me, **may that** person('s thought) **always be the cause that fulfills all** (his) **goals**, whatever he may wish for, be it dharma or material goods and the like, **through these** skillful means (of giving him whatever he desires). Thus (Śāntideva) presents (an aspiration) that (whatever) thoughts (sentient beings entertain about him) will never be in vain.[14]

> inserted root text: stanza 17
>
> May whoever slanders me
> Or whoever does me any harm
> Or, similarly, whoever insults me in whatever way,
> All have the fortune of enlightenment.

[87] "**May** (all) sentient beings, **whoever** blames and **slanders me** directly to my face, **or whoever** actually **does me any harm** in body and wealth, **or, similarly, whoever** secretly **insults me in whatever way**, through various (forms of) mockery, denigration and the like; (may) even **all** (of them) **have the fortune of** attaining great **enlightenment**." Thus, (Śāntideva) presents (an aspiration) that (whatever) actions (sentient beings undertake in regard to him) will never be in vain.

[88] In brief, from the *Pitā-putra-samāgama-sūtra*: "May whoever donates food to me, (Buddha Śākyamuni), attain the bliss of peaceful nirvāṇa." As has just been quoted, I pray to become the cause that fullfills all desired goals of all sentient beings who see me, hear me, think of me, touch me or have a positive or negative connection (with me), and that accomplishes their temporary and ultimate happiness, without exception.

**Dedicating the fruition of one's mind-training for the benefit of others**

> inserted root text: stanza 18
>
> May I be a protector for those without protection,
> A guide for those who have set out on the road,
> A boat, a ship, and a bridge
> For (all) who wish to cross (the water).

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[14] According to *mi nyag kun bzang 'grel chen*, page 108, this stanza must be translated as follows: "If an angry or faithful thought arises in anyone who thinks of me, may these (thoughts) always be the cause that fulfill all goals of these (beings)."

[89] bzhi-pa ni / **bdag ni** sems-can khas-zhan dbang-chung-ba **mgon-med**-pas nyams-thag-pa **rnams kyi mgon**-skyabs-dam-par gyur-cig // de-bzhin-du tshong-pa la-sogs-pa **lam**-du-**zhugs**-pa **rnams kyi ded-dpon** gyi gtso-bo **dang** / pha-rol-du **brgal**-bar **'dod**-pa **rnams kyis** chu 'bring-po la gru bzang-po **dang ni** chen-po la **gzings** chen-po **dang** chung-ngu rnams la **zam-pa nyid du gyur**-cig /

> inserted root text: stanza 19
>
> gling don gnyer la gling dang ni //
> mar me 'dod la mar me dang //
> gnas mal 'dod gnas mal dang //
> bdag ni lus can bran 'dod pa //
> kun gyi bran du 'gyur bar shog /

[90] yun-ring rgya-mtsho'i-chu-dbus-nas-song-bas skyo nas **gling don**-du-**gnyer**-ba rnams **la** chu med-pa'i sar bza' shing me-tog yod-pa'i **gling dang ni** / mtshan-mo yi-ge sogs la blta-bar 'dod-pa sogs blang-dor-gyi-bya-ba mun-pas-sgrib nas **mar-me 'dod**-pa rnams **la mar-me dang** / 'dug-pa'i-**gnas** dang nyal-ba'i-**mal 'dod**-pa **la gnas** dang **mal** bzang-po **dang** / **bdag ni lus-can** nad-pa dang rgan-pa sogs **bran**-khol **'dod-par kun gyi** ci-bsgo-ba nyan-pa'i-**bran du 'gyur-bar-shog-cig** //

> inserted root text: stanza 20
>
> yid bzhin nor dang bum pa bzang //
> rig sngags grub dang sman chen dang //
> dpag bsam gyi ni shing dag dang //
> lus can rnams kyi 'dod 'jor gyur //

[89] Fourth: **May I**, (Śāntideva), **be** a sublime refuge, **a protector for those** who are pitiful because sentient beings are meek, powerless and **without protection**; likewise (may I be) **a** leading **guide for those who have set out on the road**, such as traders and the like, **a**n excellent **boat for (all) who wish to cross** to the other side of a middle-sized stream, **a** great **ship** (for all who wish to cross) a great (ocean), **and a bridge** (for all who wish to cross) a small (brook).

> inserted root text: stanza 19
>
> May I be an island for those who seek an island,
> A lamp for those who desire a lamp,
> A place and a bed for those who want a place and a bed,
> And a servant for all
> Beings who wish for a servant.

[90] **May I be an island**—laden with food and flowers at a place lacking water—**for those who seek an island**, being exhausted since they have been long in coming from the middle of the ocean; **a lamp for those who desire a lamp** since the darkness keeps them from the conduct of accepting and rejecting, such as wanting to read scriptures and the like at night; **a** good **place and a bed for those who want a place** in which to rest **and a bed** in which to sleep; **and a servant**—who listens to whatever he is told—**for beings who wish for a servant**, such as the sick, the elderly and so forth.

> inserted root text: stanza 20
>
> May I be a wishing jewel, a noble vase,
> An accomplished vidyā-mantra and a great medicine,
> A wish-fulfilling tree,
> And a wish-granting (cow) for beings.

[91] gling-bzhi sogs la gang 'dod kyi char-'beb nus-pa'i **yid-bzhin**-gyi-**nor**-bu-dbang-gi-rgyal-po **dang** / gang ci-'dod thams-cad 'byung-ba'i gter-chen-po'i **bum-pa-bzang**-po dang / rig-sngags-grub-pa[15] rnams kyis rigs-sngags-kyi-rdzas[16] gzhan la gtor-bas phog-tshad 'dod-pa'i-lha dang skal-ba mnyam-pa'i rig-'dzin grub nas tshe nyi zla-bas ring mdangs padma las gsal / stobs glang-po bas che-ba sogs kyi yon-tan byung-bas na bklag-pa-tsam-gyis dngos-grub 'byung-ba'i **rig-sngags-grub** nas[17] sems-can gyi don-byed-pa **dang** / nad dang gdon thams-cad zhi-bar-byed-pa'i **sman-chen**-po rnams **dang** / blos-ji-ltar-bsam zhing dpag-pa thams-cad 'byung-ba'i **dpag-bsam-gyi-ni-shing dag dang** / **lus-can rnams kyi** ji-ltar 'dod-pa bzhos-pas 'byung-ba'i **'dod-'jor** te 'dod-pa-'jo-ba'i-ba-dmar zal-du-**gyur** cig /

> inserted root text: stanza 21
>
> sa sogs 'byung ba chen po dang //
> nam mkha' bzhin du rtag par yang //
> sems can dpag tu med pa yi //
> rnam mang nyer 'tsho'i gzhir yang shog /

[92] gzhan-yang **sa** la-**sogs**-pa'i **'byung-ba-chen-po**-bzhi-po 'di ni phyi-nang-gi-'byung-'gyur thams-cad 'byung-bas 'byung-ba ste de'ang gnas-pa ltos-che zhing khyab-pa rgya-che-bas na chen-po ste / sas rten dang chus sdud-pa dang mes smin-pa dang rlung gis mi rul-bar-byed-pa la-sogs-pa **dang** / **nam-mkha'** yis thams-cad khyab cing go-'byed-pa'i sgo-nas sems-can thams-cad kyi nyer-'tsho-byed-pa de-**bzhin-du** bdag-nyid kyang dus-**rtag-par yang sems-can** grangs **dpag-tu-med-pa** yi rten sdud smin g.yo go-'byed-pa dang zas gos nor longs-spyod la-sogs-pa **rnam**-pa **mang**-po'i **nyer-'tsho'i** ste nyer-bar-'tsho-ba ji-snyed-pa'i rgyu'am **gzhir yang shog**-cig khyab-pa rgya-che-ba'i smon-lam dang /

> inserted root text: stanza 22
>
> de bzhin nam mkha'i mthas gtugs pa'i //
> sems can khams la rnam kun tu //
> thams cad mya ngan 'das bar du //
> bdag ni nyer 'tsho'i rgyur yang shog /

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[15] A, B, C: rigs sngags grub pa

[16] A, B, C: rigs sngags kyi rdzas

[17] A, B: rigs sngags grub nas; C: rig sngags grub nas

[91] **May I be a wish-fulfilling jewel**, the king of powers, with the capacity to let a rain of whatever is wished for shower upon the four continents and other (places). (May I be) **a noble vase** of great treasures which produces whatever is desired. (May I be) **an accomplished vidyā-mantra**, which through mere reading gives rise to accomplishments and thus works for the benefit of sentient beings, because when someone who has (truly) accomplished family-mantras throws mantra substances at others, then all who are hit will become knowledge-holders, equal in fortune to the gods of (the) desire (realm), thus giving rise to qualities such as a lifespan longer than that of the sun and moon, a radiance brighter than that of a lotus, a power greater than that of an elephant and the like. **And** (may I be) **a great medicine** that pacifies all diseases and disease-causing demons. (May I be) **a wish-fulfilling tree** that provides everything that the mind can imagine and conceive of; **and a wish-granting (cow),** which through milking, fulfills whatever **beings** wish **for**; that is to say, a red-dappled cow that grants all wishes.

> inserted root text: stanza 21
>
> In the same way as earth and so forth—
> The great elements—and space (provide the basis for life),
> May I always be the basis for providing manifold necessities
> For countless sentient beings.

[92] Furthermore, as far **as earth and so forth—the** four **great elements**—are concerned, they are called 'elements'[18] because they give rise to all external and internal factors. Since their presence is magnificent and their extent vast, they are called 'great'. All (necessities of) sentient beings are provided for by earth supporting, water gathering, fire ripening, wind preventing decay, **and space** encompassing everything and providing openness. **In the same way (**as the elements provide the basis for life)**, may I** myself also **always** support, gather, ripen, move, and provide openness **for countless sentient beings**; and (may I) **be the basis** or cause **for** providing whatever necessities there may be, that is to say **providing manifold necessities** such as food, clothing, riches, wealth and so forth. Thus, (Śāntideva makes) an aspiration of vast extent.

> inserted root text: stanza 22
>
> Likewise, may I as well be a cause for providing necessities,
> In all circumstances, for the realms of sentient beings,
> Which extend to the farthest reaches of space,
> Until all reach nirvāṇa.

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[18] The Tibetan noun 'element' also functions as a verb and means 'giving rise' ['byung ba].

[93] **de-bzhin nam-mkha'i-mthas-gtugs** zhes nam-mkha' 'di med-par-ma-gyur-ba de-srid-du khyab cing zad-pa-med-**pa'i sems-can**-gyi-**khams** rnams **la** dus dang **rnam**-pa **kun-tu** ste sems-can de-dag **thams-cad mya-ngan**-las-**'das bar-du** ste thams-cad sangs-rgyas te gcig-kyang-ma-lus-pa de-srid-du **bdag ni** gang-la ci-dgos-pa'i longs-spyod sna-tshogs-pa'i **nyer-'tsho'i rgyur yang shog** ces gnas-pa rgyun-ring-ba'i smon-lam mo //

[94] de-ltar blo-sbyang-ba 'di-nyid ni sems-bskyed kyi sngon-du sbyor-ba dang rjes-su bslab-bya'ang yin-pas na / blo rgya-bskyed nas smon-lam-'debs dgos te / da-lta thugs-bskyed dang smon-lam rgya-che-chung gis sangs-rgyas dang byang-sems rnams la phrin-las rgya-che-chung ltar snang-ba yin-pas shin-tu gal-che'o //

[95] gnyis-pa dngos-gzhi dam-bca'-ba ni / 'di ni sems-bskyed-kyi-sdom-pa-len-chog yin la / sems-bskyed la rgyal-po-lta-bu / mnyan-pa-lta-bu / rdzi-bo-lta-bu'i-sems-bskyed gsum las gang-yin kyang / len-tshul yang 'phags-pa-thogs-med-kyi-lugs ltar-na smon-'jug-so-sor-len cing / klu-sgrub-kyi-lugs ltar-na smon-'jug-gi-sdom-pa stabs-gcig-tu-len la /

[96] de-yang bla-ma-mtshan-ldan las len na ngo-tsha dang khrel yod kyi rten tu mchog yin la / mtshan-ldan-gyi-bla-ma ma 'byor na'ang theg-chen-gyi-rten-gsum dang tshogs-zhing gi drung-du blang na'ang sdom-pa-skye-ba gsungs /

[97] gang-ltar-yang dgongs-su-gsol-ba gsum gyis sad-par-byas te skyabs-su-'gro-ba gsum gyi gzhi-bzung nas so-sor-len na / ji-ltar-sngon-gyi sogs rkang-pa-gnyis dang de-bzhin-'gro-la-phan sogs rkang-pa-gnyis kyis smon-sems-kyi-sdom-pa dang byang-sems-dpa'i-bslab-pa sogs rkang-pa-gnyis dang de-bzhin-du-ni sogs rkang-pa-gnyis kyis 'jug-sdom-blang ngo //

[93] **Likewise**, **may I be as well a cause for providing necessities**—the various enjoyments that anyone may need—**for the realms of** inexhaustible **sentient beings,** '**which extend to the farthest reaches of space**', meaning (that sentient beings exist) as far as space pervades, at (all) times and **in all circumstances,** that is **until all** these sentient beings **reach nirvāṇa**, in other words until all attain buddhahood, with not a single one excluded. Thus, (Śāntideva makes) an aspiration to remain forever.

[94] Thus, this mind-training is a preliminary practice for developing bodhicitta as well as a training for the future (when bodhicitta has been developed). Therefore, having expanded your mind, you must make aspirations. The present scope of our development of bodhicitta and of our aspirations will manifest as the scope of our activities as buddhas and bodhisattvas. Therefore, (mind-training) is of great importance.

**Second, the main part, making the commitment**

[95] Second, the main part, making the commitment: This concerns the ritual of receiving the precepts for generating bodhicitta. In regard to generating bodhicitta, there is the way of a king, the way of a boatman and the way of a shepherd. Whichever of these three ways of generating bodhicitta (one might adopt), the way of receiving (the precepts follows two traditions): according to the tradition of the noble Asaṅga one receives (the precepts for bodhicitta of) aspiration and application separately, and according to the tradition of Nāgārjuna one receives the precepts for bodhicitta of aspiration and application simultaneously .

[96] It is best if you receive (the precepts) from a qualified master since he (functions) as a supreme object that (inspires) shame and embarrassment. If you do not have a qualified master, the precepts are (still) born (in your mind), if you receive them in front of the three representations of Mahāyāna or in front of the field of accumulation.

[97] In any case, having begun with three petitions, and laid the foundation by going for refuge three times, then, if you (want to receive the precepts) separately, with the (first) two lines (of stanza 23), 'Just as (the sugatas of) former times' and so forth, and with the (first) two lines (of stanza 24), 'Likewise for the sake all beings' and so forth, you receive the precepts for bodhicitta of aspiration. With (the second) two lines (of stanza 23), 'In the trainings of a bodhisattva' and so forth, and with the (second) two lines (of stanza 24), '(And) likewise I shall' and so forth, you receive the precepts for (bodhicitta of) application.

> inserted root text: stanza 23
>
> ji ltar sngon gyi bde gshegs kyis //
> byang chub thugs ni bskyed pa dang //
> byang chub sems dpa'i bslab pa la //
> de dag rim bzhin gnas pa ltar //

[98] stabs-gcig-tu-len na so-byang-sngags-gsum-gyi-sdom-pa len tshe sngon-gyi-dpe-ltar len-par mtshungs-pas 'dir yang dpe **ji-ltar** na sngon bdag-cag-gi-ston-pa rdza-mkhan-gyi-khye'u snang-byed du gyur tshe de-bzhin-gshegs-pa shākya-thub-pa-chen-po'i mdun-du thugs-bskyed-pa dang / sangs-rgyas spyan-chen-po'i mdun-du dge-slong mi-'khrugs-pas thugs-bskyed-pa dang / bcom-ldan-'das mgon-po 'od-dpag-med dang / sangs-rgyas-sman-gyi-bla-ma la-sogs-pa **sngon-gyi bde**-bar-**gshegs**-pa rnams **kyis** bla-na-med-pa'i-**byang-chub**-chen-por **thugs-ni-bskyed-pa dang** / **byang-chub-sems-dpa'i-bslab-pa** ste bslab-par-bya-ba rgya-chen-po rnams la bde-bar-gshegs-pa **de-dag** gis las-dang-po-pa nas sangs-rgyas-kyi-sa'i bar-la **rim**-pa-**bzhin**-du bslabs shing **gnas-pa ltar**

> inserted root text: stanza 24
>
> de bzhin 'gro la phan don tu //
> byang chub sems ni bskyed bgyi zhing //
> de bzhin du ni bslab pa la'ang //
> rim pa bzhin du bslab par bgyi //

[99] **de-bzhin-du** bdag gis kyang nam-mkha' dang mnyam-pa'i **'gro**-ba sems-can thams-cad **la phan**-pa bla-na-med-pa sangs-rgyas-kyi-go-'phang-'thob-pa'i **don** nam ched-**du** smon-pa-**byang-chub**-kyi-**sems ni bskyed**-par-**bgyi zhing** / **de-bzhin-du ni** byang-chub-sems-dpa'i-**bslab-pa** phar-phyin-drug sogs **la'ang** dus-'di-nas-bzung-ste rang gis nus-tshod dang sbyar nas **rim-pa-bzhin-du bslab-par-bgyi'o** zhes 'jug-sems-bskyed de sdom-pa'i-thob-mtshams de-ltar lan-gsum brjod-pa'i tha-ma'i tshe yin-pas de-dus bdag gi rgyud la smon-'jug-gi-sdom-pa thob bo snyam-du thob-blo skye dgos so //

> inserted root text: stanza 23
>
> Just as the sugatas of former times
> Directed their minds toward awakening,
> And just as they established themselves by states
> In the trainings of a bodhisattva;

[98] If you receive (the precepts of bodhicitta of aspiration and application) simultaneously—as when receiving the precepts of prātimokṣa, bodhicitta or (secret) mantra (during an empowerment)—you should follow the example of the previous (buddhas). Therefore, **just as the sugatas of former times**—our teacher (Buddha Śākyamuni), when he was the potter's son Prabhāsa,[19] developed bodhicitta before the Tathāgata Mahā-Śākyamuni; Bhikṣu Akṣobhya developed bodhicitta before Buddha Mahācana; and so did the Bhagavan, Lord Amitābha and others—**directed their minds** (citta) **toward** great and unexcelled **awakening** (bodhi), **and just as they**, the sugatas, trained and **established themselves by stages in the trainings of a bodhisattva**, that is to say in the vast fields of training, from (the level of) a beginner up to the level of a buddha;

> inserted root text: stanza 24
>
> Likewise for the sake of all beings
> I give birth to bodhicitta,
> And likewise I shall also
> Practice the trainings by stages.

[99] "**Likewise**, **I** also **give birth to bodhicitta** of aspiration **for the** benefit and **sake of all beings**—that is to say sentient beings—equal to the farthest reaches of space, so that they attain the unexcelled level of buddhahood. **And likewise I shall also practice the trainings** of a bodhisattva—the six transcendental perfections and so forth—from today onward, **by stages**, according to my capacity." Saying this, you develop bodhicitta of application. The (actual) point of obtaining the precepts [sdom pa'i thob mtshams] is at the instant of the last of three repetitions. Therefore, you must at that moment generate the confidence of having received [thob blo] (the precepts), thinking, "I have obtained the precepts of aspiration and application in my mind."

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[19] Some sources give skr. Ābhākara for the Tibetan snang byed.

[100] slob-dpon rgya-mtsho'i-sprin ltar-na dang-pos smon-pa gnyis-pas 'jug-pa gsum-pas brtan-par-byas zhes gsung-ba bzhin thob-blo skyed dgos-pa'o // de-ltar byang-sems sbyang-ba la brtson dgos-pas na dus dang rnam-pa thams-cad du byang-sdom-len-pa 'di shin-tu gal-che-ba yin-pas 'di la brtson-par-bya dgos so //

[101] de la rim-pa-bzhin zhes-pa 'dir sa-skya-pa rnams kyis nyes-spyod-sdom-pa'i-tshul-khrims la byang-chub-sems-dpa' dbang-po-rab-'bring-tha-ma-gsum las / rab kyis nam-mkha'i-snying-po'i-mdo las gsungs-pa'i rtsa-ltung-bco-brgyad-po bsrung dgos-pa dang / 'bring gis khyim-bdag-drag-shul-can-gyi-zhus-pa'i-mdo las gsungs-pa'i rtsa-ltung ser-snas chos nor mi ster-ba sogs bzhi-po bsrung dgos-pa dang / tha-mas gsang-chen-thabs-la-mkhas-pa'i-mdo las gsungs-pa'i smon-sems mi 'dor-ba tsam bsrung-bas chog-pas rtsa-ltung la rgyas-'bring-bsdus-pa'i-rim-pa yod-pas rim-pa-bzhin-du zhes bzhed-pa dang /

[102] yang tshogs-lam du nyes-spyod-sdom-pa dang / sbyor-lam du dge-ba-chos-sdud dang / 'phags-lam du sems-can-don-byed-kyi-tshul-khrims la bslab-par-bzhed-pa dang / yang tshod-ma la-sogs sbyin-pa nas rang lus gtong nus-pa'i bar-du blo-nus dang bstun nas bslab-par-bzhed-pa yod la /

[103] rang-lugs la lag-bzang-gi-zhus-pa'i-mdo las / dus dang dus-su cung-zad cung-zad sogs gsungs-pas byang-chub-sems-dpa'i-spyod-pa rgya-mtsho lta-bu la dang-po-nyid-nas slob mi nus-par rim-par-bzhin-du slob-par gsal-por-gsungs shing bslab-btus su bslab-pa rang-nyid kyi stobs dang sbyar te blang-bar-bya ste / zhes gsungs-pas na / rang gis nus-tshod dang sbyar nas byang-chub-sems-dpa'i-bslab-pa la rim-bzhin bslab-pas je-bzang-du-'gro-ba yin no gsungs /

[104] gsum-pa mjug rang-gzhan-dga'-ba bsgom-pa la / rang-dga'-ba-bsgom-pa dang / gzhan-dga'-ba-bsgom-du-gzhug-pa gnyis las /

[100] According to Master Sāgaramegha: "Through the first (repetition one receives the precepts of bodhicitta of) aspiration; through the second (one receives the precepts of bodhicitta of) application; and through the third one stablizes (both sets of precepts)." (Since) it is explained like this, you must generate the confidence of having received (the precepts). Because you must be diligent in training in bodhicitta in this way, taking the bodhicitta precepts at all times and in all circumstances is extremely important. Therefore, be diligent in this.

[101] The Sakyapas state that the term 'by stages' refers to bodhisattvas of highest, middling and lowest capacity in regard to the discipline of refraining from negative conduct: Those of highest (capacity) must avoid the eighteen root downfalls, as explained in the *Ākāśa-garbha-sūtra*. Those of middling (capacity) must avoid the four root down-falls such as not giving the dharma or riches due to stinginess and so forth, as explained in the *Gṛhapati-ugra-paripṛcchā-sūtra*. For those of lowest (capacity) it is sufficient merely not to forsake (the bodhicitta of) aspiration and application, as the *Mahā-rahasyopāya-kauśalya-sūtra* explains. Since they thus have 'gradations' of elaborate, middling and brief in regard to (avoiding) the root downfalls, they interpret (the term) 'by stages' (in this way).

[102] Futhermore, the (Sakyapas) state that one must train in the discipline of refraining from negative conduct while on the path of accumulation, in the discipline of gathering virtuous dharmas while on the path of application, and in the discipline of fulfilling the benefit of sentient beings while on the (three remaining) exalted paths. They state further that one must train in accordance with one's own mental capacity, beginning with giving vegetables and the like, until one is able to give away one's own body.

[103] In regard to our own tradition, (the Nyingma), the *Subāhu-paripṛcchā-sūtra* states: "From time to time, little by little." Therefore, since one is not able to train in the ocean-like conduct of the bodhisattvas from the outset, one is clearly instructed to train (in the precepts of a bodhisattva) 'by stages'. In the *Śikṣā-samuccaya* it is said, "Training 'by stages' in accord with one's capacity in the precepts of the bodhisattvas, (one's capacity to keep the precepts) will get better and better."

**The conclusion, generating joy about oneself and causing others to generate joy**

[104] Third, the conclusion, generating joy about oneself and for others has two (parts): (1) generating joy about oneself and (2) causing others to generate joy.

> inserted root text: stanza 25
>
> de ltar blo dang ldan pa yis //
> rab dvang byang chub sems bzung nas //
> mjug kyang rgyas par bya ba'i phyir //
> sems ni 'di ltar gzengs bstod do //

[105] dang-po ni / gong-du-bshad-pa **de-ltar blo**-shes-rab-**dang-ldan-pa yis** sems **rab**-tu-**dvang**-ba'i sgo-nas sbyor-ba dang dngos-gzhi'i cho gas[20] **byang-chub**-kyi-**sems**-bskyed de sdom-pa-**bzung nas** rjes sam **mjug kyang** mi nyams-par brtan zhing gong-nas-gong-du-'phel zhing **rgyas-par-bya-ba'i phyir**-du rang gi **sems ni 'di-ltar gzengs-bstod** cing dga'-bar-byed **do** //

> inserted root text: stanza 26
>
> deng dus bdag tshe 'bras bu yod //
> mi yi srid pa legs par thob //
> de ring sangs rgyas rigs su skyes //
> sangs rgyas sras su da gyur to //

[106] ji-ltar-na sems-bskyed-pa **deng**-gi-**dus**-'dir bdag gson-pa'i **tshe** 'di la don nam **'bras**-bu **yod**-par gyur la / ji-skad-du / legs na thar-pa'i-gru-gzings lus 'di yin // nyes na 'khor ba'i-gting-rdo lus 'di yin // zhes-pa ltar / **mi-yi**-skye-ba'am **srid-pa**-thob-pa'ang nyes-thob ma yin-par **legs-par thob**-par-gyur te dus-**de-ring**-nas rdzogs-pa'i-**sangs-rgyas** bcom-ldan-'das rnams kyi **rigs-su-skyes** shing **sangs-rgyas** thams-cad kyi gdung-'tshob-pa'i-thugs-kyi-**sras su da gyur to** //

> inserted root text: stanza 27
>
> da ni bdag gis ci nas kyang //
> rigs dang mthun pa'i las brtsams te //
> skyon med btsun pa'i rigs 'di la //
> rnyog par mi 'gyur de ltar bya //

---

[20] B: sbyor dang dngos gzhi'i tshogs

### Generating joy about oneself

> inserted root text: stanza 25
>
> When an intelligent person has lucidly
> Adopted bodhicitta in this way,
> He should also in the future, in order to expand it further,
> Inspire his mind in the following manner:

[105] From these (three) the first: **When an intelligent person** endowed with wisdom, has **adopted** the precepts of generating **bodhicitta**, with a **lucid** mind, through the preliminary and main ceremonies **in the way** explained above, he should **also** thereafter or **in the future**, **in order to** stabilize it and not let it decrease, but to increase it more and more and **to expand it further**, **inspire his mind** and be joyful **in the following manner**:

> inserted root text: stanza 26
>
> Today my life has become fruitful.
> Human existence is well obtained.
> Today I have been born into the family of the buddhas
> And have now become a son of the buddhas.

[106] Having generated bodhicitta, **today my life**, as a living person, **has become fruitful** and (my) **human** rebirth or **existence is well obtained,** not being a negative achievement. As it is said: "When (my conduct) is good, this body is a boat to liberation. When (my conduct) is bad, this body is a stone that pulls me down into saṃsāra." **Today I have been born into the family of the** perfect **buddha**-bhagavans **and have now become a** heart **son of** all **buddhas**, who maintains the family lineage.

> inserted root text: stanza 27
>
> From now on, in any situation,
> I will (only) undertake actions that accord with the (Mahāyāna) family.
> Never shall I defile
> This unsullied and noble family.

[107] des-na **da ni bdag gis** las ci la bab **nas kyang** theg-chen-gyi-**rigs dang mthun-pa'i las** gzhan-don kho-na **la brtsams te** sangs-rgyas bcom-ldan-'das dang 'jam-pa'i-dbyangs sogs nas rang-nyid la thug gi bar-du brgyud-pa'i-bla-ma thams-cad rang-'dod-yid-byed sogs kyis rtsa-ltung gis gos ma myong-bas ltung-ba'i **skyon-med**-pas **btsun**-par-gyur-**pa'i-rigs 'di la** bdag rang-thog-nas pha-rjes-bus-zin-par-byas nas nyes-ltung gi dri-mas **rnyog**-pa dang bcas-**par mi 'gyur**-ba **de-ltar** bslab-pa la 'bad-par-**bya** zhes yang-yang bsam dgos so //

> inserted root text: stanza 28
>
> long bas phyag dar phung po las //
> ji ltar rin chen rnyed pa ltar //
> de bzhin ci zhig ltar stes nas //
> byang chub sems 'di bdag la skyes //

[108] rnyed-par-dka'-ba'i tshul yang dper-na mi rnyed-pa'i tshad mi **long-bas** te long-ba zhig gis gnas **phyag-dar**-byas-pa'i rdul-gyi-**phung-po las ji**-zhig-**ltar** yid-bzhin-gyi-nor-bu **rin-chen** rnyed-par-**gyur-pa** na shin-tu ngo-mtshar-du-blta zhing dga'-ba rgya-chen-po skye-ba **ltar** don **de-bzhin**-tu **ji-zhig-ltar-stes** te / ji-skad-du / srin-bu'i zos-pa'i yig-'bru ni // stes-dbang yin gyi bsgrub-pas min // zhes-pa ltar so-so'i-skye-bo'i gnas nyon-mongs-pa'i rdul-khrod nas ji-zhig-ltar bsod-nams kyi stes-dbang legs-par-gyur **nas** srid-zhi'i-rgud-pa thams-cad sel-bar-byed-pa'i **byang-chub**-kyi-**sems**-rin-po-che **'di bdag la skyes**-pa ni shin-tu ngo-mtshar-che-bar-bltas te dga' zhing spro-bar-bya'o //

> inserted root text: stanza 29
>
> 'gro ba'i 'chi bdag 'joms byed pa'i //
> bdud rtsi'i mchog kyang 'di yin no //
> 'gro ba'i dbul ba sel ba yi //
> mi zad gter yang 'di yin no //

[107] Therefore, **from now on, in any situation**,[21] **I will** only **undertake actions that accord with the** Mahāyāna **family,** (actions) for the benefit of others. From the Buddha Bhagavān, Mañjuśrīghoṣa and so forth, down to myself, none of the lineage masters have experienced the stains of root downfalls, such as selfishness[22] and the like. Therefore, **unsullied** (by downfalls), they are **noble**. **I shall** strive in the (bodhisattva) training so that I **never defile this family** with the stains of defects and downfalls, taking (this duty) upon myself like a son following in his father's footsteps.

> inserted root text: stanza 28
>
> Just like a blind man
> Discovering a jewel in a heap of dust,
> Likewise by some coincidence
> Bodhicitta has been born within me.

[108] The difficulty of obtaining (bodhicitta): For example, it is most unobtainable, **just like a blind man**, meaning a blind person, **discovering a jewel**, a wish-fulfilling gem, **in a heap** while sweeping **dust**, will regard it with wonder and will be filled with great joy; **likewise**, when **by some coincidence**—just as it is said, "Letters (appearing on a tree because) insects have eaten (the bark) are coincidental and not intentional"—**the precious bodhicitta**, which clears away each and every suffering of existence and peace, **has been born within me**, within the life of an ordinary being, amidst the dust of afflictions, by a mere meritorious coincidence, then I will regard it in great amazement and be joyous and excited.

> inserted root text: stanza 29
>
> This (bodhicitta) is also the supreme nectar
> That defeats the lord of death, (the slayer) of beings.
> This (bodhicitta) is the inexhaustible treasure
> That eliminates (all) the poverty of beings.

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[21] Whatever karmic situation may arise, good or bad [gnas stangs kyi las ga 'dre zhig 'byung na las yag ga sdug ga ga re yin na].

[22] 'Selfishness' or 'egotistical motivation' [rang 'dod yid byed] is one of the root downfalls [rtsa ltung] of a bodhisattva and means to practice for one's own sake, and not for the sake of sentient beings.

[109] byang-chub-sems-dpa' rnams kyis sems-can rnams la rang-rang gi mos-pa dang mthun-par chos bstan-pa'i sgo-nas mtha'-yas-pa'i **'gro-ba** ma-lus-**pa'i 'chi-bdag**-gi-bdud rtsa-ba-nas **'joms** shing 'chi-med zhi-ba byang-chub-chen-po thob-par-**byed-pa'i bdud-rtsi mchog**-tu-gyur-pa nyid **kyang** byang-chub-kyi-sems **'di yin** te / rgyud-bla-ma las /

> 'chi-med zhi-ba'i-gnas thob la //
> 'chi-bdud rgyu-ba-med-pa'i phyir //

zhes gsungs-pa ltar dang / gnas-skabs-su-yang dus-min-kyi-'chi-ba bzlog-par-byed-pa'i bdud-rtsi yang yin **no** //

[110] kyang-sgras lha-klu-mi'i grub-pa'i rig-'dzin rnams kyi sgrub-pa'i bdud-rtsi'i lo-brgya-phrag du-mar mi 'chi-bar byed nus-pa las mchog-tu-bstan to //

[111] sa-brgyad-par yo-byad-la-dbang-thob-pas **'gro-ba'i-dbul-ba** ma-lus-pa **sel-ba**'am med-par-byed-pa **yi** nam-mkha'-mdzod-kyi-longs-spyod-**mi-zad**-pa'i-**gter**-chen-po gyur-pa **yang** byang-chub-kyi-sems **'di**-nyid **yin** no //

> inserted root text: stanza 30
>
> 'gro ba'i nad rab zhi byed pa'i //
> sman gyi mchog kyang 'di yin no //
> srid lam 'khyam zhing dub pa yi //
> 'gro ba'i ngal bso'i ljon shing yin //

[112] rgyu chags-sdang-rmongs-gsum sogs nyon-mongs-pa'i nad dang de'i 'bras-bu rlung mkhris bad-kan sogs sdug-bsngal gyi nad yin la byang-chub-sems-dpa' rnam kyis mi-sdug-pa dang byams-pa dang rten-'brel dang bdag-med-pa'i-chos bstan-pas **'gro-ba'i** rgyu-'bras kyi **nad** ma-lus-pa **rab**-tu-**zhi**-bar-**byed-pa'i sman**-bzang-po kun-gyi-**mchog**-nyid **kyang** byang-chub-kyi sems **'di yin no**//

[109] Since the bodhisattvas teach the dharma to sentient beings in accordance with their individual wishes, **this** bodhicitta **is also the supreme nectar that** utterly **defeats the lord of death,** (the slayer) **of** boundless **beings** without exception, and causes them to attain great awakening, deathless peace. From the *Uttara-tantra*:

> Once the abode of deathless peace is attained,
> The māra of death cannot move about.

Temporarily, (bodhicitta) is also a nectar that averts an untimely death.

[110] The term 'also' (in the root text) shows (that bodhicitta) is supreme even to the accomplished (longevity) nectars[23] of the vidyādharas, made by gods, nāgas and humans, which have the power to prevent death for many hundreds of years.

[111] Since on the eighth (bodhisattva) level one attains power over requisites, **this** bodhicitta **is also a** great **treasure** of the **inexhaustible** riches of the sky treasury **that eliminates** all **the poverty of beings**.

> inserted root text: stanza 30
>
> This (bodhicitta) also is the supreme medicine
> That pacifies the diseases of beings.
> It is the tree that shelters all beings
> Wandering and wearied on the path of existence.

[112] In regard to the cause: the disease of afflictions such as desire, anger, stupidity and so forth; and (in regard to) the fruition (of afflictions): the disease of suffering, (illnesses) such as (imbalances of) wind, bile, phlegm and so forth, the bodhisattvas give teachings on ugliness, loving-kindness, interdependent origination and egolessness. Therefore, **this** bodhicitta **is also the supreme** of all noble **medicine**s, **that** utterly **pacifies**, without exception, the cause and fruition of **the diseases of beings**.

[23] 'Accomplished (longevity) nectar' [sgrub pa'i bdud rtsi] here meams 'a nectar that accomplishes longevity' [tshe ring sgrub pa'i bdud rtsi].

[113] sher-phyin las / nyon-thos zhi-ba tshol rnams kun-shes-nyid kyis nyer-zhi khrid-mdzad ces-pa ltar byang-chub-sems-dpa' rnams kyis theg-gsum sogs kyi lam shes-par-mdzad nas **srid**-pa-'khor-ba'i-**lam** 'dir yun-ring **'khyams shing** sdug-bsngal gyis ngal zhing **dub-pa yi** nyan-rang-gi-rigs-can skyes-bu 'bring du gyur-pa'i **'gro**-ba sdug-bsngal gyis mnar-**ba'i** sems-can rnams la nyan-thos-kyi-lam bstan te srid-pa'i-sdug-bsngal zhi-bar-byed-pas na sdug-bsngal gyis **ngal**-ba-**gso**-bar-byed-pa'i gnas **ljon-shing** bzang-po'i bsil-grib lta-bu nyan-rang-gi-'bras-bu thob-pa'ang byang-chub-kyi-sems 'di-nyid kyi mthu las byung-ba **yin** zhing /

> inserted root text: stanza 31
>
> 'gro ba thams cad ngan 'gro las //
> sgrol bar byed pa'i spyi stegs yin //
> 'gro ba'i nyon mongs gdung sel ba'i //
> sems kyi zla ba shar ba yin //

[114] skyes-bu-chung-ngu'i **'gro-ba thams-cad** la bsod-nams-cha-mthun-gyi-dge-ba'i lam dge-sdig-blang-dor bstan ste / **ngan**-song-gsum gyi **'gro**-ba'i gnas **las sgrol-bar**-byas nas mtho-ris lha-mi'i-bde-'bras la 'god cing 'dzin-par-**byed-pa'i spyi-stegs** zhes gyom-khri lta-bu **yin**-pa dang / de'ang ngan-song las sgrol-bar-byed-pas spyi-stegs sam sems-can thams-cad theg-gsum gyi nges-legs la 'god-pa'i thog-mar mngon-mtho la 'god dgos-pas na lam spyi'i-stegs su'ang gsungs /

[115] de-ltar 'gro-ba rnams mngon-mtho dang theg-dman-gyi-nges-legs la bkod nas theg-chen-gyi-rigs-can rnams dang mthar de rnams dang bcas-pa theg-chen la 'god-pa ni byang-chub-sems-dpa' rnams kyis bzhed-don mthar-thug-pa yin-pa'i phyir chos theg-pa-chen-po bstan te mtha'-yas-pa'i **'gro-ba'i** rgyud kyi gtso-bo thar-pa la bar-du-gcod-pa'i chags sogs **nyon**-mongs-pa'i-sgrib-pa'i tsha-**gdung** ma-lus-pa **sel**-bar-**byed-pa'i sems**-kyi-dam-pa byang-chub-kyi-sems 'di ni bsil-ba'i rang-bzhin gyi **zla-ba shar-ba** lta-bu **yin** la /

[113] The *Prajñā-pāramitā-abhisamayālaṃkāra*[24] says: "Those who seek the peace of the śrāvakas, will be guided to complete peace through knowing all." Thus, the bodhisattvas, knowing the paths of the three vehicles, teach the path of the śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas to sentient beings who have been **wandering on this path of** saṃsāric **existence** for a long time and are exhausted and **wearied** by suffering, to the middling type of persons, those of the śrāvaka and pratyekabuddha families, **beings** who are oppressed by suffering; thereby pacifying the suffering of existence. Therefore, even the attainment of the fruition of the śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas that is like the cooling shade of **a** noble **tree**, a place that **shelters** from suffering, arises from the power of bodhicitta.

> inserted root text: stanza 31
>
> It is the palanquin
> That liberates them from the lower realms.
> It is the rising moon of the mind
> That dispels the torment of affliction.

[114] Since (the bodhisattvas) teach the path that concords with (worldly) merit, practicing virtue and rejecting negative deeds, to all beings, (particularly) those persons of lowest capacity, bodhicitta **is the palanquin** [spyi stegs], that is to say a sedan chair [gyom khri], **that liberates them from** the places that lead to **the** three **lower realms**, and carries them to and establishes them in the blissful fruition of the higher realms of gods and men. Moreover, as (bodhicitta) liberates (sentient beings) from the lower realms it is said to be 'a staircase' and the 'support for all paths' [lam spyi'i stegs] since before establishing all sentient beings in the fruition of the three vehicles [theg pa gsum gyi nges legs], (bodhicitta) has the initial purpose of establishing (them) in the higher realms.

[115] After beings (of lowest capacity) have thus been established in the higher realms and (those of middling capacity) in the fruitions of the Hīnayāna, (the bodhisattvas) establish those who have an affinity with Mahāyāna—eventually even including (those of the lower and middling capacity)—in the Mahāyāna. This is the ultimate objective of the bodhisattvas. Therefore, in teaching the Mahāyāna dharma, this bodhicitta is like **the rising moon**, by nature cooling, the sublime point **of the mind** which **dispels**, without exception, the hot **torment** of the obscuration **of affliction** such as desire and so forth, the primary obstacle for liberation in the minds of boundless **beings.**

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[24] See *sher phyin rtsa 'grel*, page 2

[116] de la nyon-sgrib ni mgon-po-byams-pas /

> ser-sna la-sogs rnam-rtog gang //
> de ni nyon-mongs-sgrib-par 'dod //

ces phar-phyin-drug gi mi-mthun-pa'i-phyogs rags-pa thams-cad yin no //

> inserted root text: stanza 32
>
> 'gro ba'i mi shes rab rib dag /
> dpyis 'byin nyi ma chen po yin //
> dam chos 'o ma bsrubs pa las //
> mar gyi nying khu phyung ba yin //

[117] **'gro-ba'i** rgyud kyi thams-cad-mkhyen-pa rnam-mkhyen la gtso-bor bar-du-gcod-pa'i dngos-po rnams kyi de-nyid **mi-shes**-pa'i-**rab-rib** shes-bya'i-sgrib-pa mtha'-**dag dpyis** te drung-nas-**'byin**-par-byed-pa'i byang-chub-kyi-sems 'di-nyid stong-gsum gyi mun-pa gcig-char-du sel-bar-byed-pa'i **nyi-ma chen-po** lta-bu **yin** la

[118] shes-sgrib yang de-nyid kyis /

> 'khor-gsum-rnam-par-rtog-pa gang //
> de ni shes-bya'i-sgrib-par 'dod //

ces 'khor-gsum la bden-par-zhen na yul gcig la dmigs na // der 'thog-pas gzhan shes-bya thams-cad gcig-char-du mthong-bar mi nus-pas na der 'dod do //

[116] In this context, concerning the obscuration of affliction, Maitreyanātha said:

> All thoughts such as stinginess and the like
> Are declared to be the obscuration of affliction.

Thus, (the afflictions) are all coarse (concepts) that do not accord with the six transcendental perfections.

> inserted root text: stanza 32
>
> It is the great sun that utterly dispels
> The misty ignorance of beings.
> It is (like) clarified butter which comes forth
> From churning the milk of the sublime dharma.

[117] This bodhicitta—which **utterly** [dpyis], meaning completely, **dispels** all obscuration of cognition, **the misty ignorance** about the nature of things that is the main obstacle to omniscience, to knowing everything,[25] in the mind **of beings**—is like **a great sun** that eliminates at once the darkness of 'the third order of a thousand (world systems)'.[26]

[118] About obscurations of cognition, the same (Maitreyanātha) said:

> All thoughts of the three concepts
> Are declared to be obscurations of cognition.

If one grasps at the three concepts as being real, and if one focuses on a single object, one is limited by it. Consequently, one cannot perceive all fields of knowledge simultaneously. (Maitreyanātha) thus defines (obscurations of cognition).

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[25] The terms 'omniscience' [thams cad mkhyen pa] and 'knowing all' [rnam mkhyen] are synonyms. 'Knowing all' is short for 'the wisdom that knows all aspects' [rnam par thams cad mkhyen pa'i ye shes], and refers to the Buddha's capacity to know in one single instant all aspects of the natural state as it is [gnas lugs ji lta ba], and of all fields of knowledge [shes bya ji snyed pa].

[26] The term 'third order of thousand (world systems)' [stong gsum], often translated as 'three thousand-fold world systems', means 1.000 to the power of three, which equals one billion single world systems.

[119] sangs-rgyas kyi bka' **dam**-pa'i-**chos** 'khor-lo-gsum gyi snying-po'i-yang-zhun byang-chub-kyi-sems 'di ni dper-na **'o-ma** mang-po **bsrubs-pa** las snying-po mar dang **mar-gyi-nying-khu** zhes mar-bzhu-pa'i dvangs-ma'i-dvangs-ma nying-khu **phyung-ba** lta-bu mchog-tu-gyur-pa nyid **yin** no //

> inserted root text: stanza 33
>
> 'gro ba'i 'gron po srid pa'i lam rgyu zhing //
> bde ba'i longs spyod spyad par 'dod pa la //
> 'di ni bde ba'i mchog tu nyer gnas te //
> sems can 'gron chen tshim par byed pa yin //

[120] rigs-drug-gi-**'gro**-ba mtha'-yas-**pa'i 'gron-po srid-pa'i-lam** ste mtho srid-pa'i-rtse-mo nas dma'-ba dmyal-ba-mnar-med kyi bar-du **rgyu zhing** 'gro-bas sdug-bsngal-bar-gyur-ba las gnas-skabs dang mthar-thug gi **bde-ba'i longs-spyod**-la-**spyad-par 'dod-pa** rnams **la** byang-chub-sems-dpa' **'di ni** byang-chub-sems kyi mthus **bde-ba'i-mchog** 'chi-med-zhi-ba thob-pa la-sogs-pa gong-du ji-skad bstan-pa rnams kyi don-**du** 'khor-bar skyes nas **nyer-gnas** zhes nye-bar-gnas **te** dper-na tsa-ri'i-tshos-kha bzung-ba bzhin-du **sems-can** rnams skad-cig-ma-tsam-du mi sdod-par 'chi-ba la thag je-nyer 'gro zhing gtan-du sdod-pa'i-sar thon rgyu med-pas **'gron**-po **chen**-por gyur-pa rnams gang 'dod-pa'i bde-bas ngoms shing **tshim-par-byed-pa** de-yang byang-chub-sems kyi mthus **yin** no zhes don-bsdus ste bstan-pa'o //

> inserted root text: stanza 34
>
> bdag gis de ring skyob pa thams cad kyi //
> spyan sngar 'gro ba bde gshegs nyid dang ni //
> bar du bde la 'gron du bos zin gyis //
> lha dang lha min la sogs dga' bar gyis //

[121] gnyis-pa ni / 'di bshad-gzhi sngon-du-blang ste / mgron-du-'bod-pa yin / sus 'bod na **bdag gis** / dus-nam 'bod na **de-ring**-nas tshul-ji-ltar 'bod na **skyob-pa** sangs-rgyas bcom-ldan-'das byang-chub-sems-dpa'i tshogs dang bcas-pa **thams-cad kyi spyan-sngar** te dpang-po-bzhag-pa'i mdun-du / su 'bod na nam-mkha'-dang-mnyam-pa'i **'gro-ba** sems-can thams-cad bos te ci sbyin na mthar-thug-gi-bde-ba **bde**-bar-**gshegs**-pa sangs-rgyas-kyi-go-'phang **nyid dang ni** /

[119] This bodhicitta, the refined essence of the three promulgations **of the sublime dharma**, the direct words of the Buddha, **is** supreme just **like** the essence of butter—and like what is called **clarified butter,** the purest of the pure essence of melted butter—which **comes forth from churning** plenty of **milk**.

> inserted root text: stanza 33
>
> For (all) guests, beings travelling on the paths of existence
> Who wish to experience the pleasures of happiness,
> The (bodhisattva) remains (in saṃsāra) so that (beings attain) supreme bliss,
> Thus satisfying sentient beings, his chief guests.

[120] **For** (all) those **who wish to experience the pleasures of** temporary and ultimate **happiness**, having suffered from **travelling** or wandering **on the paths of existence**, from the top, the peak of existence, to the bottom, the avici hell; for (all) those infinite **guests, beings** of the six classes, **the** bodhisattva, through the power of bodhicitta, takes rebirth in saṃsāra **so that** (beings) attain **supreme bliss**, the deathless peace and so forth—all (attainments) that have been described above—and **remains**, meaning dwells (in saṃsāra)—like someone who sets up a food-tent for pilgrims on Mount Tsari—for those **sentient beings** who are moving closer to death without a moment's respite, and for whom there is never a place of permanent rest, and who are therefore **his chief guests**, pleasing and **satisfying** (them) with whatever happiness they long for. This also (occurs) through the power of bodhicitta. Thus, (Śāntideva) condenses and teaches the meaning (of the previous stanzas).

**Second, causing others to generate joy**

> inserted root text: stanza 34
>
> Today in the sight of all protectors,
> I summon beings to be my guests (in order to bestow upon them) happiness
> Until (they attain the level) of the sugatas,
> May gods, asuras and others generate joy.

[121] Second, having previously mentioned this subject (of causing others to generate joy, now the actual explanation): Guests are summoned. Who is summoning them? **I** myself. When do I summon them? From **today** onward. How are they to be summoned? In front of those who function as witnesses, that is to say **in the sight of all protectors**, the buddha-bhagavans, together with their entourage of bodhisattvas. Who is summoned? All sentient beings, **beings** equal to the farthest reaches of space, are summoned. What is bestowed upon them? The ultimate bliss, the level of the **sugata**-buddha.

[122] de-ma-thob-kyi-**bar-du** gnas-skabs-kyi-bde-ba mngon-par-mtho-ba lha dang mi yi **bde-ba** phun-sum-tshogs-pa sbyin-pa **la mgron-du-bos-zin gyis** gtsang-ris-kyi-dpal-mgon-bdun-cu-rtsa-lnga sogs dkar-phyogs-kyi-**lha dang lha-min la-sogs**-pa thams-cad **dga'-bar-gyis**-shig ces dga'-ba-sgom-du-gzhug-pas de-dag gis rjes-su-yi-rang-bas phan-yon gyi bgo-skal thob cing bsrung-skyob-byed-pa dang / de-dag dpang-por-bzhag-pas rang gi ngo-tsha dang khrel-yod kyi rten du'ang 'gyur-ba'i dgos-pa yod do //

> inserted root text: chapter title
>
> byang chub sems dpa'i spyod pa la 'jug pa las / byang chub kyi sems yongs su gzung ba zhes bya ba ste le'u gsum pa'o //

[123] le'u'i-mtshan ni / **byang-chub-sems-dpa'i-spyod-pa-la-'jug-pa las** / **byang-chub-kyi-sems** gtso-bor **yongs-su-bzung-ba zhes-bya-ba ste le'u gsum-pa'o** //

[122] **Until** they have attained this (level), I **summon** (beings) **to be my guests**, in order to bestow upon them the perfect **happiness** of gods and men, the temporary happiness of the higher realms, and therefore I cause (the gods) to generate joy, saying: "**May** all **gods**, namely the virtuous gods such as the seventy-five glorious protectors of the pure realms, the **asuras and others, generate joy**." Since they, (the gods and asuras), rejoice (in my bodhisattva pledge), they obtain their share of benefit (from rejoicing in it) and they grant (me) their protection. Establishing these (buddhas and bodhisattvas) as my witnesses serves the purpose of their becoming an object of shame (toward oneself) and embarrasment (in the face of others) for me.

**Listing the name of the chapter**

> inserted root text: chapter title
>
> From the *Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra*, the third chapter, entitled: "The Thorough Adoption of Bodhicitta."

[123] The name of the chapter is: **From the *Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra*, the third chapter, entitled, "The Thorough Adoption of Bodhicitta** as the main theme**."**

Khenpo Chöga's Oral Explanations

# Khenpo Chöga's Oral Explanations

# of

# Khenpo Kunpal's Commentary

**Text sections 35-38:**

*To adopt bodhicitta*, 'to seize bodhicitta' [byang chub sems yongs su gzung ba], means to take the bodhisattva precepts and actually begin to apply bodhicitta in one's daily life. In order to receive the precepts, one first needs to purify one's mind through the practice of the 'eight sections' [yan lag brgyad]: 1) the section on presenting offerings [mchod pa 'bul ba'i yan lag], 2) the section on paying respect [phyag 'tshal ba'i yan lag], 3) the section on going for refuge [skyabs su 'gro ba'i yan lag], 4) the section on confessing wicked deeds [sdig pa bshags pa'i yan lag], 5) the section on rejoicing [rjes su yi rang ba'i yan lag], 6) the section on requesting to turn the wheel of dharma [chos 'khor bar bskul ba'i yan lag], 7) the section on supplicating not to enter into nirvāṇa [mya ngan las mi 'da' bar gsol ba'i debs pa'i yan lag], and 8) the section on dedicating the roots of merit for the benefit of others [dge rtsa gzhan don du bsngo ba].

The first four sections have been discussed in the previous chapter. This chapter will cover the remaining four sections. The qualities of bodhicitta will take birth in one's mind only if one is endowed with sufficient merit. Practicing the 'eight sections' is a very simple but powerful tool to accumulate vast amounts of merit.

Accumulating merit changes our negative patterns into virtuous ones and loosens up our habitual fixation on negativity.[27] Gathering merit ultimately eliminates our fixations, allowing wisdom to dawn. The power of merit leads thus to the dawn of wisdom, the recognition of our buddha nature.

To attain enlightenment one must gather the two accumulations: the 'accumulation of conceptual merit' and the 'accumulation of non-conceptual wisdom'.[28] Bodhicitta only arises when one has gathered considerable conceptual merit. For this reason many methods for generating conceptual merit, such as the practice of the eight sections, are taught in the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra.

In addition to gathering the two accumulations, one must also purify the two obscurations, the obscurations of afflictions[29] and the obscurations of cognition.[30] Attaining enlightenment requires perfecting the two accumulations and purifying the two obscurations. The accumulation of merit provides the conducive conditions for buddha nature to be recognized and the purification of obscurations allows the qualities of the buddha nature to naturally be revealed.

**Text section 39:**

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[27] sdig pa

[28] dmigs med ye shes kyi tshogs

[29] nyon mongs kyi sgrib pa

[30] shes bya'i sgrib pa

Rejoicing [rjes su yi rang] means 'being happy about something' [rjes su dga' ba]. Your mind might be happy about virtue [dge ba'i rjes su sems dga'] or it might be happy about negative deeds [sdig pa'i rjes su sems dga']. Furthermore, you can rejoice about your own qualities and actions or about those of others. Rejoicing in your own goodness is a remedy for low self-esteem and rejoicing in the virtues of others has the function [byed las] of overcoming jealousy and envy [phrag dog].

The essence [ngo bo] of rejoicing is 'a pure mind' [sems dvangs ma]. The practice of rejoicing results in your attaining the same virtue and merit as the person in whose virtue and merit you rejoice. This also counts for rejoicing in non-virtue and demerit. One receives the same degree of merit or demerit as the object in which you rejoice [rjes su yi rang ba'i yul]. Therefore, if you rejoice in someone else's negative deeds, you will receive the same amount of negativity as the actual perpetrator.

Rejoicing is also called 'the secret and magical path' [gsang ba sgyu ma'i lam]. For instance, one person gathers great virtue by diligently practicing the dharma for fifty years, while another person simply remains at home, rejoicing in that practitioner's virtue. Through the power of rejoicing, the second person gains the same degree of merit as the practitioner.

Since no one can see this hidden method of accumulating virtue and merit, rejoicing is called 'a secret path'. It is called 'magical' [sgyu ma lta bu] because this method of gaining vast merit requires no effort or action in body or speech. It is the perfect practice for all those who have faith in Buddhism who are unable, for whatever reason, to practice. This teaching on the secret and magical practice of rejoicing is an oral instruction of the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra, as explained according to Paltrül Rinpoche's tradition. Rejoicing in the virtues of others is a very effective and important meditation practice.

People said that when Patrül Rinpoche expounded the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra in East Tibet during the spring, special flowers grew that were never seen or heard of in that area. They were reported to be huge flowers with one or two hundred petals. This flower grew only when Paltrül Rinpoche taught the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra. These special flowers, called 'Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra flowers' [spyod 'jug me tog], were taken as a sign that the gods were rejoicing in Paltrül Rinpoche's teachings of the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra.

Parents rejoice in the qualities of their children based on attachment, a very limited way of rejoicing. Instead, rejoice in the qualities of all sentient beings. You may rejoice sincerely in other people's qualities or in their achievements. Remembering the kindness of others can be a cause for rejoicing. You can rejoice with devotion [dad pa], with respect [gus pa] and with pure perception [dag snang]. Rejoicing can have many causes and can take many forms.

You should rejoice in the virtues accumulated by the three kinds of persons: the lower, the middling and the highest kind of person. The lower kind of person means ordinary worldly beings ['jig rten pa]. The middling kind of person refers to those who practice the Hīnayāna path, the followers of the śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas. The

highest kind of person refers to those who practice the Mahāyāna path, the followers of the Buddha and the bodhisattvas,

Each of these three kinds of persons accumulates a different kind of virtue: 1) The lower kind of person gathers virtue that concords with worldly merit ['jig rten gyi bsod nams cha mthun gyi dge ba]. 2) The middling kind of person gathers virtue that concords with (Hīnayāna) liberation [thar pa cha mthun gyi dge ba]. 3) The highest kind of person gathers the virtue that concords with the liberation of the greater vehicle [theg chen thar pa cha mthun gyi dge ba]. Each of these three types of virtue can be viewed in regard to their causes [rgyu] and their fruitions ['bras bu].

**Text sections 40-41/ stanza 1:**

First, rejoicing in the virtues of the lower kind of person, virtue that concords with worldly merit, has two aspects: rejoicing in the cause and rejoicing in the fruition.

*Rejoicing in the cause* [rgyu la yi rang ba] of a lesser person's virtue means to be truly happy about whatever virtuous causes other people gather that lead to a fruition. Although a person of the lowest kind practices the ten virtuous actions [dge ba bcu'i nyams len], his practice is not embraced by the motivation of renunciation, or of bodhicitta.

Moreover, his virtue is certainly not embraced [rtsis ma zin pa] by the wisdom that realizes egolessness [bdag med rtogs pa'i shes rab]. His 'virtue concords with ordinary worldly merit' ['jig rten gyi bsod nams cha mthun gyi dge ba] or with 'actions that concord with merit' [bsod nams dang mthun pa'i las]. Practicing the ten virtuous actions frees one from the misery of the three lower realms and ensures rebirth in the three higher realms. Think, "I gladly rejoice from the bottom of my heart in the virtues of all persons who practice that kind of virtue, the causes for rebirth in the higher realms."

*Rejoicing in the fruition* ['bras bu la yi rang ba] of a lesser person's virtue means that since, from the perspective of the three lower realms the three higher realms appear as joyful and pleasant places, we rejoice in the virtue of those who have attained this happy state. Gods and humans of the three higher realms have good bodies [gzugs bzang po], power, fame, wealth, enjoyments and the like. Truly rejoice in their happiness and wealth. Think or say out aloud, "How wonderful that these beings have the merit to be so happy and well." Take as much pleasure in other people's happiness, wealth and enjoyments as a small child seeing its mother at the end of a long day. Without any jealousy, envy or competitiveness, truly rejoice in their present state of existence, the fruition of their former virtue.

Even being reborn in the three higher realms does not free one from the three kinds of suffering [sdug bsngal gsum]: Omnipresent suffering in the making, suffering of change and suffering upon suffering.

Omnipresent suffering in the making [khyab pa 'du byed kyi sdug bsngal] pervades all the three realms of saṃsāra. Actually, we are totally immersed in the causes of suffering all the time. Ego-clinging and afflictions form the causes for future suffering.

Although you might not feel this suffering right now, you are constantly preparing, manufacturing and attracting the causes for future suffering. Our very food and clothing, our homes, the adornments and celebrations that give us pleasure, are all produced with harmful actions. As everything we do and enjoy is just a concoction of negative actions, it can only lead to suffering.

Suffering of change ['gyur ba'i sdug bsngal] is the suffering experienced when a state of happiness suddenly changes into suffering. Suffering upon suffering [sdug bsngal gyi sdug bsngal] means that before one suffering is finished we are subjected to another.

**Text sections 42-44 / stanza 2:**

Rejoicing in the virtues of the middling kind of person, virtue that concords with the liberation [thar pa cha mthun gyi dge ba] of the lower vehicles [theg dman], also has the two aspects of rejoicing in the cause and rejoicing in the fruition.

*Rejoicing in the cause* [rgyu la yi rang ba] of a middling person's virtue: For an arhat, all the formerly existing karma, the ego-clinging [bdag 'dzin] and all afflictions [nyon mongs] have ceased [zad] and will never again emerge [slar mi skye]. Those who have reached this state, the enlightenment [byang chub] of a śrāvaka-arhat [nyan thos dgra bcom pa] or of a pratyekabuddha [rang sangs rgyas] have achieved the wisdom-knowledge that realizes egolessness [bdag med rtogs pa'i shes rab]. This insight is the highest wisdom, the highest enlightenment of śrāvaka-arhats and pratyekabuddhas. However, seen from the perspective of Mahāyāna, this attainment is not the highest enlightenment [bla med byang chub].

The virtue that is the cause for the enlightenment of the śrāvaka-arhats and pratyekabuddhas is renunciation embraced by the wisdom that realizes egolessness. This virtue is not embraced by bodhicitta. Think, "I gladly rejoice in all those who have practiced such virtue."

*Rejoicing in the fruition* ['bras bu la yi rang ba] of a middling person's virtue: Such persons are liberated from the three kinds of sufferings of saṃsāra, and have attained the path of learning [slob pa'i lam] or the level of an arhat, the path of no more learning [mi slob pa'i lam].[31] For the arhats, as they will have no more rebirth, the ocean of blood and tears has dried up. They will no longer experience suffering. As the arhats are free from any fixation, gold and ordinary metal are the same for them. Remembering all these qualities of their renunciation and realization [spangs rtogs kyi yan tan], think, "I gladly rejoice in the virtues and accomplishments of those śrāvaka arhats."

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[31] The five paths [lam lnga] are divided in the path of learning [slob pa'i lam] and the path of no more learning [mi slob pa'i lam]. The path of learning includes (1) the path of accumulation [tshogs lam], (2) the path of application [sbyor lam], (3) the path of seeing [mthon lam], and (4) the path of meditation [sgom lam]. According to the Hīnayāna tradition, someone who has attained (5) the path of no more learning has become either an arhat or a pratyekabuddha.

In particular, only due to the kindness of the śrāvaka arhats is the vinaya, considered to be the teaching and the teacher, the legacy of our compassionate teacher Buddha Śākyamuni, still in existence.

Among the tripiṭaka [sde snod gsum], the three baskets of teachings—sūtra, abhidharma and vinaya—the vinaya is considered the most precious legacy of Buddha Śākyamuni. The vinaya is the teaching of the Buddha [sangs rgyas kyi bstan pa] and it is also the teacher, the Buddha himself ['dul ba ston pa sangs rgyas yin].

The baskets of sūtra and abhidharma are considered dharma only, and are not identified with the Buddha himself. The vinaya however functions as the actual representative [tshab] of the Buddha.

Those who handed down the tradition of the tripiṭaka were mainly the śrāvaka arhats, such as the seven generations of heirs to the doctrine [bstan pa'i gtad rabs bdun] which are the seven patriarchs: 1. Mahākāśyapa ['od srung chen po], 2. Ānanda [kun dga' bo], 3. Śāṇavāsika [sha na'i gos can], 4. Upagupta [nyer sbas], 5. Dhītika [dhī ti ka], 6. Kṛṣṇa [nag po pa], and 7. Mahāsudarśana [legs mthong chen po]. These arhats and patriarchs passed on the Buddha's teachings from one to another in turn.[32] Since the tripiṭaka and in particular the precious vinaya dharma still exists in this world only due to the kindness of these śrāvaka arhats, I rejoice with devotion in their kindness and virtues.

**Text sections 45-46 / stanza 3:**

Rejoicing in the virtues of the greater beings, those that concord with the liberation of the greater vehicle, also has the two aspects of rejoicing in the fruition and rejoicing in the cause. Khenpo Kunpal first explains rejoicing in the fruition.

*Rejoicing in the fruition:* Rejoice in the ultimate fruition, in all those who have reached the infinite qualities of the great perfect enlightenment, the qualities of renunciation and realization [spangs rtogs kyi yon tan] of all the buddhas. Rejoice as well in the temporary fruition, in the attainments of the bodhisattvas, in the qualities of renunciation and realization, from the first to the tenth bodhisattva level.

**Text sections 47-49 / stanza 4:**

*Rejoicing in the cause*: I rejoice in the oceanic virtues of developing bodhicitta, the motivation to free all beings, equal to the reaches of space, from suffering and to establish them on the level of buddhahood. 'To develop bodhicitta' [byang chub mchog tu thugs bskyed] means 'to expand one's mind to supreme enlightenment' [byang chub mchog tu thugs rgya chen po gtong ba].

I rejoice in the virtue that brings inconceivable benefits to beings, in the application, the training in the six transcendental perfections [pha rol tu phyin pa drug], the four

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[32] For the life stories of the seven generations of heirs to the doctrine see *Nyingma School of Tibetan Buddhism*, pages 432-439 and *Crystal Mirror Vol. VI*, pages 202 ff.

attractions [bsdu ba bzhi] and so forth. Bringing to mind the explanations of the benefits and qualities of bodhicitta from the first chapter of this text, I gladly rejoice from the bottom of my heart in the virtues of all those who practice the precious bodhicitta.

The virtue of the bodhisattvas is embraced by the precious bodhicitta and the wisdom that has realized egolessness [bdag med rtogs pa'i shes rab]. Their virtue is complete, with the excellent beginning, the excellent main part and the excellent conclusion.

If you rejoice in this fashion, you will obtain a merit even greater than the merit of the person in whose merit you rejoiced. Previously, *King Prasenajid* [rgyal po gsal rgyal] invited the Buddha and his entourage to eat their daily meal at his palace for a period of four months, during which time he offered them all his possessions. A beggar woman of the area was filled with joy at this action. She thought, "King Prasenajit has acquired all this wealth through the merit he accumulated in the past, and now that he has met the Buddha, who is such an exceptional field of merit, his accumulation of merit will be truly immense. How wonderful!"

Through her sincere and perfect rejoicing, she created boundless merit. Lord Buddha was aware of this. That night, when it was time to dedicate the merit, the Buddha said to the king, "Would you like me to dedicate the source of merit that you have acquired to you, or shall I dedicate it to someone who is more worthy of it than you are?"

The king replied, "Dedicate it to whoever has the greatest source of merit." So the Buddha dedicated the merit in the name of the old beggar women, "May the old beggar woman have happiness and the causes for happiness." In this way, although the king had accumulated great virtue, the virtue that the old beggar women obtained was even greater than the king's virtue, simply due to the power of her pure and perfect rejoicing.

The weight of the entire 'third order of a thousand world systems'[33] could possibly be measured, but the virtue of rejoicing is unfathomable. If you practice rejoicing, you

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[33] The term 'third order of thousand (world systems)' [stong gsum], often translated as 'three thousand-fold world systems', means 1.000 to the power of three, which equals one billion single world systems. One single world system ['jig rten gyi khams] includes Mount Sumeru, sun and moon, the four continents, the worlds of the gods of desire and the world of Brahmā. The sum of 'a thousand single world systems' is called 'the first order of a thousand world systems' [stong dang po / stong dang po'i jig rten gyi khams / stong spyi phud kyi 'jig rten gyi khams] or 'the lesser order of a thousand world systems' [stong chung ngu'i 'jig rten gyi khams], which means 1.000 to the power of one.

One thousand 'lesser order of a thousand world systems' constitute 'the middle order of a thousand world systems' [stong bar ma'i 'jig rten gyi khams] or 'the second order of a thousand world systems' [stong gnyis pa; skr. dvi-sāhasra / stong gnyis pa'i jig rten gyi khams], which means a thousand to the power of two or one million separate world systems.

One thousand 'middle order of a thousand world systems' make 'the large order of a thousand world systems' [stong chen po'i 'jig rten gyi khams] or 'the third order of a thousand world systems' [stong gsum pa; tri-sāhasra], also called 'the third order, the larger order of one thousand world systems' [stong gsum gyi stong chen po'i 'jig rten gyi khams; skr. tri-sāhasra-

naturally avoid furthering your arrogance [nga rgyal] and public displays of religious pretentiousness [ngams chos]. Rejoicing is really an instruction in how to gain great merit swiftly with no hardship. Practice it whenever you see or hear of anybody's virtue.

When you practice rejoicing, try to think of all the virtue and merit sentient beings have accumulated in all infinite world-systems. Expand your thoughts to all inconceivable world-systems and Buddha fields. In this very instant, countless sentient beings are liberated from the three lower realms. In this very instant, countless sentient beings are attaining the level of arhatship. In this very instant, inconceivable numbers of sentient beings are becoming bodhisattvas. Think about the countless sentient beings who are attaining complete and perfect enlightenment at this very moment. Rejoice in the infinitely vast virtue and merit that is being accumulated in this very instant somewhere among the myriads of world-systems.

A positive thought, a positive motivation, a positive action is called 'virtue' [dge ba] and will lead to positive results. A positive action can also be called a 'wholesome action' or a 'skillful action', as it brings benefit to oneself and others. What makes a thought or action 'wholesome' [dge ba] or 'unwholesome' [mi dge ba] is measured by the result. An action that forms the causes for happiness is called 'wholesome' or 'virtuous' and an action that forms the causes for suffering is called 'unwholesome' or 'non-virtuous'. Happiness and the causes for happiness are wholesome and virtuous, while suffering and the causes for suffering are unwholesome and non-virtuous. This is the law of cause and effect, the law of volitional action called karma. Buddha saw that some actions lead to suffering and others to happiness. He saw that thoughts and actions based on faith [dad pa], compassion [snying rje], knowledge [shes rab] and wisdom [ye shes] lead to happiness and are therefore virtuous. And he saw that thoughts, emotions and actions based on greed ['dod chags], anger [zhe sdang] and stupidity [gti mug] lead to suffering and are non-virtuous. Non-virtue is also called 'evil deeds' or 'negative deeds' or 'wicked deeds' [sdig pa].

'Virtue' [dge ba] and 'merit' [bsod nams] are two different words with the same meaning. 'Merit' is defined as having the power to annihilate suffering and the causes for suffering. The etymology of the word in Tibetan derives from 'to annihilate' [bsod] and 'to be powerful' [nams].

A distinction is made between 'conceptual merit' [dmgis bcas kyi bsod nams] and 'non-conceptual merit' [dmigs med gyi bsod nams]. Conceptual merit results from following three factors: an actor, a positive action and a recipient of that action. Non-conceptual merit refers to wisdom and is devoid of these three factors. This distinction refers to the two accumulations, the accumulation of merit [bsod nams kyi tshogs] and the accumulation of wisdom [ye shes kyi tshogs]. A skilled yogin is able to practice both

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mahāsāhasro loka-dhātuḥ], which means a thousand to the power of three or one billion separate word systems—a trichiliocosm. For further details see *Buddhist Cosmology*, *Illuminator, Myriad Worlds*; and *Prince Jiṇ-Gim's Textbook.*

accumulations at the same time. While performing a virtuous action, the yogin remains in the non-conceptual state, thus accumulating wisdom. While remaining in the non-conceptual state, he enacts virtuous deeds and thus accumulates merit. The virtue [dge ba] that noble beings accumulate is called 'non-defiling virtue' [zag med gyi dge ba], while the virtue of ordinary beings is called 'defiling virtue' [zag bcas gyi dge ba].

You should rejoice in all the virtues that have been accumulated throughout the three times [dus gsum bsags], all the virtues of all noble and ordinary beings. For incalculable times in the past, both noble and ordinary beings have been accumulating virtue. Countless noble beings have attained the state of an arhat, of a bodhisattva or of a completely enlightened buddha. At the present moment, in all infinite world systems, countless noble beings are attaining enlightenment, countless buddhas are setting the wheel of dharma in motion or entering into nirvāṇa. Similarly, in the future, countless noble beings will traverse the path to enlightenment. In the same way, countless ordinary beings have accumulated virtue in the past, do so in the present and will continue to do so in the future.

The highest form of rejoicing is to rejoice in one's own buddha nature. In this context, rejoicing means to recognize one's buddha nature as it truly is [bde gshegs snying po ji lta ba bzhin du mkhyen pa].

**Text sections 50-55 / stanza 5:**

Turning the wheel of dharma is the antidote to ignorance. The essence [ngo bo] of turning the wheel of dharma is knowledge [shes rab] and faith [dad pa]. The function [byed las] is to dispel the darkness of ignorance [ma rig pa'i mun pa]. Turning the wheel of dharma is a supreme method to gather the accumulation of merit.

Turning the wheel of dharma only takes place when the listeners understand the value of the teaching being taught. The listeners need to have gained confidence in the dharma. If they lack this quality, then the teaching is not called 'turning the wheel of the dharma'. The first persons who requested the Buddha to turn the wheel of the dharma were Śakra [brgya byin], the king of the gods, and Brahma [tshangs pa]. They knew that Buddha had realized a priceless dharma. They understood the value [rin thang] of the dharma.

Dharma means 'the wisdom of inseparable knowledge and compassion' [shes rab dang snying rje dbyer med pa'i ye shes]. Dharma is the true cause of happiness, as it liberates us from suffering. The great masters of the past, who understood the value of the teachings and methods that they held in their minds, were able to turn the wheel of dharma. Only when both teacher and listeners understand the true value of the dharma are the teachings called 'turning the wheel of dharma'. Only then is something of value being passed on and received. Turning the wheel of dharma requires the knowledge [shes rab] that realizes the wisdom of the teachings as well as the compassion to pass on these teachings to others. Turning the wheel of dharma in this way bears boundless merit.

In most cases nowadays, teachers pass on the eight worldly concerns ['jig rten chos brgyad]. Listeners request what interests them and the teacher teaches what he likes best. A true teacher, however, does not try to please his audience. The dharma is fundamentally opposed to the ways of the world ['jig rten]. A dharma that is in harmony with the world is not the buddha dharma. The dharma should not be an enhancement for worldly life. When one requests a buddha to turn the wheel of dharma, one requests him to destroy worldly ways of thinking. You ask the teacher to teach you how to destroy ego-clinging [bdag 'dzin]. You ask for teachings on how to free yourself from suffering.

Turning the wheel of the dharma is a method to make a connection between the enlightened mind of the Buddha [sangs rgyas kyi thugs] and the minds of sentient beings [sems can gyi sems]. The dharma needs to be communicated. Buddha said:

> I have shown you the methods that lead to liberation.
> Be diligent as liberation depends upon yourself.
>
> ngas ni khyad la thar pa'i thabs bstan pas
> thar pa rang la rags las brtson par gyis

Beseeching the Buddha to turn the wheel of dharma is an act of faith. As it is said: "If the ring of faith is lacking, the hook of compassion cannot connect" [dad pa'i a long med na thugs rje'i lcags kyu 'dzin thabs med]. Unless the student is a proper vessel, teaching the dharma is useless. When devotion rises in a student's mind, he becomes a proper vessel [snod] for the dharma.

> When the sun of devotion does not shine
> On to the snow mountain-like four kayas of the guru,
> The blessing-stream will not descend.
> Therefore, generate intense devotion within your mind.
>
> bla ma sku bzhi'i grangs ri la
> mos gus kyi nyi ma ma shar na
> byin rlabs kyi chu rgyun mi 'bebs pas
> sems mos gus 'di la nan tan mdzod

The student requesting the dharma must understand its preciousness. If the student lacks deep respect and faith for the dharma, the dharma will be of no use to him. The Buddha did not teach casually. When he taught, his students were aware of the preciousness of the dharma.

The Buddha completely recognized the importance of time [dus]. He knew when the right time to teach had come and when it had not. Sometimes he taught only when requested. Sometimes he taught without being asked to teach. The Buddha never tried to convince anyone who lacked a karmic connection to the dharma. He had no plan to

spread the dharma throughout the entire world. Buddha saw directly whether or not an individual was ready for the dharma.

The request to turn the wheel of the dharma for the sake of sentient beings has the purpose of dispelling the darkness of their ignorance [mun pa'i ma rig pa sel ba'i phyir du]. To turn the wheel of dharma, to actually teach the dharma, is the greatest of all meritorious deeds. It is the greatest of all gifts, the most beneficial donation. A donation of food will help the recipient for one or two days, while a gift of dharma will remain in the recipient's mind, benefiting him or her for all life times to come. That is why requesting the Buddha to turn the wheel of the dharma is such a meritorious act.

You might wonder why we still request the Buddha to teach the dharma although he passed away a long time ago. A buddha is not a human being. A buddha is wisdom [ye shes], which is beyond birth and death. This wisdom is endowed with the three kayas: dharmakāya, saṃbhogakāya and nirmāṇakāya. Although Buddha Śākyamuni manifested the supreme nirmāṇakāya so ordinary beings could meet him and receive the precious dharma, he himself is a wisdom body [ye shes kyi sku] and has actually never either taken birth or died.

As Buddha Śākyamuni assured Ānanda, he continues to emanate wisdom manifestions in order to guide sentient beings. As the *Mahā-bherī-sūtra* [rnga bo che'i mdo] states:

> Don't feel sad Ānanda.
> Don't lament Ānanda.
> In future times I will
> Incarnate as spiritual guides
> To help you and others.
>
> mya ngan ma byed kun dga' bo
> smre sngags ma 'don kun dga' bo
> nga nyid phyi ma'i dus kyi tshe
> dge ba'i bshes gnyen nyid sprul nas
> khyad la sogs pa'i don byed 'gyur

Therefore, we continue to request our gurus and teachers to turn the wheel of the dharma. Our gurus explain to us what truly benefits our minds. They teach us how we can transform our ordinary minds into exalted minds. They introduce us to the view [lta ba] and guide us through the different levels to complete enlightenment. Therefore, request all buddhas, bodhisattvas, gurus and teachers to expound the genuine dharma and to lead countless beings to enlightenment. By requesting them in this way to turn the wheel of the dharma, you receive the same merit as all other beings generate through requesting teachings. This then becomes an extremely powerful method for accumulating merit.

In Tibet it was customary to invite a great teacher and call many students for a specific teaching. These events were called 'organizing the turning of the dharma wheel' [chos 'khor tshugs]. The term 'dharma wheel' [chos 'khor, skr. dharmachakra] has a special connotation.[34] The Buddha taught the dharma to his students who later taught it to their students. These students again passed it on and this continuous transmission of the dharma is continuing even at the present time. This act of orally transmitting the dharma from one person to another is called 'turning the dharma wheel'.

As this process has continued from the time of the Buddha up through the present, the term 'dharma wheel' also carries the connotation of 'continuously' [rgyun mi chad pa]. The wheel of the dharma is turned so that the teachings can be truly implanted in the minds of sentient beings. This is the true intent of the Buddha [sangs rgyas kyi thugs kyi dgongs pa] and the true blessing of the Buddha [sangs rgyas kyi byin rlabs]. It is as well the source from which arise future buddhas. We request the buddhas to turn the wheel of the dharma so that sentient beings can assimilate the dharma into their minds [chos sems la bzung ba'i phyir du].

As Paltrül Rinpoche said, "As to the meaning of the term 'dharma-wheel', 'dharma' refers to the core of the dharma (the noble eightfold path), such as the genuine view and so forth. 'Wheel' connotes repeatedly turning (the dharma), transmitting it from one mind-stream to the next" [chos 'khor gyi nges tshig ni yang dag pa'i lta ba la sogs pa'i chos kyi rang bzhin yin pa dang / rgyud gcig nas gcig tu brgyud de mthun par bskor ba'i don gyis chos 'khor ro].[35]

The dharma-wheel must be continuously set in motion. This means that during one single teaching session the teacher should address each topic at least three times. When this occurs the teaching can be called 'setting the dharma-wheel in motion.' This manner of teaching also accounts for the repetitive nature of traditional Buddhist discourses and writings. In this way the teacher ensures that the true meaning of the teaching is actually transmitted to the student.

After Buddha Śākyamuni had attained enlightenment, he contemplated in the following way:

> I have found a nectar-like dharma
> Which is profound, peaceful, without complexity, luminous and uncompounded.
> To whomever I teach it, it will not be understood.
> Therefore, I will remain in the forest, without teaching.[36]
>
> zab zhi spros bral 'od gsal 'dus ma byas

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[34] According to Western scholars, at the time of Buddha Śākyamuni there was no script in use except for accounting purposes. See *The Fifth Seal*, page (???).

[35] See *sher phyin mngon rtogs rgyan*, page 18.

[36] See *sangs rgyas bcom ldan 'das kyi rnam thar*, page 132.

> bdud rtsi lta bu'i chos zhig bdag gis rnyed
> bdag gis bstan kyang go bar mi 'gyur pas
> mi smra nags 'dabs nyid du gnas par bya

Thus, in order to demonstrate the greatness of the dharma, he did not teach for seven weeks. The gods Śakra [brgya byin] and Brahma [tshangs pa], fully aware of the greatness of the dharma that Buddha had realized, requested him to turn the wheel of dharma. As a support [rten] for their request they offered the most precious objects in their possession: a white conch which was twisted to the right and a golden wheel with one thousand spokes. Śakra and Brahma requested the Buddha to turn the wheel of dharma every day for forty-nine days. Finally, he agreed to teach. By their persistence, Śakra and Brahma gained inconceivable merit.

Later, the Buddha told them that they will continue to generate merit for as long as the dharma remains. Every time the dharma has been or will be taught or practiced through the ages, Śakra and Brahma have gained and will continue to gain merit. Everytime we request any teaching from our Buddhist teachers, we should make our request for dharma in the same way as Śakra and Brahma did, accompanied by an offering to the teacher as the support for such a request.

All the great masters of the past experienced difficulties gathering sufficient wealth to be able to support their requests for the precious dharma with material offerings. Masters like Milarepa, with nothing to offer, had to serve their teachers in many ways. Longchenpa was so ashamed of having nothing to offer to his master Kumaradza that he thought of leaving before the teachings started. Knowing this, Kumaradza told him that his sincere practice of the teachings would be a sufficient offering. Longchenpa practiced sincerely for three months, without having anything to eat. This hardship in practice was his offering to his master for the teachings. This reveals that genuine teachers will never withhold the teachings from impoverished students whose sincerity they recognized.

It is said that there are three ways to please one's master, called the three delights [mnyes pa gsum]. These methods for demonstrating heart-felt appreciation for the greatness of the dharma are pleasing one's master at best through practice, next best through service, and finally with material offerings.

A material offering in connection with requesting the dharma is a way to gather the merit necessary to receive the teaching. It also shows true appreciation for the dharma. Generally, people spend their money on unwholesome actions in saṃsāric pursuits. Yet, for some reason they think that the wholesome dharma, the path of freedom from saṃsāra, should be free. That attitude shows appreciation for the unwholesome, for saṃsāra, but not for the dharma. Worldly people spend vast sums for education in worldly knowledge, while hesitating to spend anything for the priceless knowledge of the dharma. Milarepa received considerable support from his mother to learn how to do black magic. When he began to practice the genuine dharma, however, she gave him nothing.

According to the Tibetan tradition, Buddha Śākyamuni himself taught the dharma through the following three promulgations as follows.[37] The first promulgation, 'the dharma wheel of the four truths',[38] corresponds to the Hīnayāna teachings. The second promulgation, 'the dharma wheel devoid of attributes',[39] and the third promulgation, 'the dharma wheel of excellent analysis',[40] constitute the Mahāyāna teachings. The Mahāyāna teachings include both sūtra[41] and mantra.[42] Yet, the Vajrayāna teachings[43] are generally considered to be the fourth promulgation, the 'promulgation of the Secret Mantra'.[44]

One also comes across the terms, the 'dharma-wheel of statements' [lung gi chos 'khor] and the 'dharma-wheel of realization' [rtogs pa'i chos 'khor]. The 'dharma-wheel of statements' refers to all the teachings given by Buddha Śākyamuni, the complete tripiṭaka, 'the three baskets' [sde snod gsum] of the teachings, which are: 1) the vinaya piṭaka, 'the basket of discipline' ['dul ba'i sde snod]; 2) the sūtra piṭaka, 'the basket of discourses' [mdo sde'i sde snod]; and 3) the abhidharma piṭaka, 'the basket of the doctrine' [mngon pa'i sde snod].

The 'dharma-wheel of realization' refers to the three precious trainings [bslab pa rin po che rnam pa gsum]: 1) the training in discipline [tshul khrims kyi bslab pa], 2) the training in samādhi [ting nge 'dzin gyi bslab pa], and 3) the training in knowledge [shes rab kyi bslab pa]. Jigme Lingpa said:

> If one understands just one (four-)line teaching,
> This constitutes the doctrine of statements.
> If one develops a virtuous mind for just one instant,
> This itself constitutes the doctrine of realization
>
> tshigs bcad gcig gi don shes na
> de ni lung gi bstan pa yin
> dge sems skad cig skyes pa na
> de ni rtogs pa'i bstan pa yin.

Buddha Śākyamuni taught the precious dharma only when five perfect conditions [phun tshogs lnga] came together: 1) the perfect teacher [ston pa phun sum tshogs pa], 2)

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[37] For details on the three promulgations of the wheel of dharma see *Nyingma School of Tibetan Buddhism*, pages 154-155.

[38] bka' dang po bden bzhi'i chos 'khor

[39] bka' bar pa mtshan nyid med pa'i chos 'khor

[40] bka' tha ma legs pa rnam par phye ba'i chos 'khor

[41] mdo

[42] sngags

[43] gsang sngags rdo rje theg pa

[44] gsang sngags kyi chos 'khor

the perfect place [gnas phun sum tshogs pa], 3) the perfect time [dus phun sum tshogs pa], 4) the perfect entourage ['khor phun sum tshogs pa], and 5) the perfect dharma [chos phun sum tshogs pa].

The first promulgation, 'the dharma wheel of the four truths', had the following five perfect circumstances: 1) the perfect teacher, Buddha Śākyamuni; 2) the perfect place, the deer park of Ṛṣipatana [srang srong lhung ba ri dvags kyi nags tshal] in the district of Vārāṇsī; 3) the perfect time, the 4th day of the sixth month of the lunar calendar; 4) the perfect entourage, the group of five ['khor lnga sde bzang po];[45] and 5) the perfect teaching, the four noble truths.

Düjom Rinpoche writes:[46] "The first (promulgation) is as follows: After discerning the utterly impure condition of sentient beings, the teacher who promulgated the first turning of the dharma wheel intended to encourage these beings by the disturbing topics [yid 'byung ba'i gtam] of impermanence [mi rtag pa], impurity [mi gtsang ba], suffering [sdug bsngal], egolessness [bdag med pa], ugliness [mi sdug pa], and so forth, and then to cause them to forsake the attitude which actually clings to saṃsāra. For in this way they would achieve appropriate insight into ultimate truth and adhere to the path of the greater vehicle."

The second promulgation, 'the dharma wheel devoid of attributes', had the following five perfect circumstances: 1) the perfect teacher, the Buddha himself; 2) the perfect place, the Vulture Peak [bya rgod phung po'i ri bo] in Rājagṛha [rgyal po'i khab]; 3) the perfect time, the time when Buddha and his entourage gathered simultaneously, which refers to the 15th day of the fourth month of the lunar calendar; 4) the perfect entourage, monks such as Subhuti [rab 'byor] and bodhisattvas such as Maitreya; 5) the perfect teaching, the teaching on emptiness and Prajnaparamita. During this second turning of the wheel, the Buddha taught mainly on emptiness.

Düjom Rinpoche writes:[47] "Concerning the second (promulgation): The Tathāgata's perseverance was not interrupted merely by the first promulgation of the dharma-wheel. Subsequently, the teacher promulgated the second turning of the dharma-wheel, intending that the realization of the ultimate truth, which is referred to by synonyms [rnam grangs] in order to bring about the partial cessation of conceptual elaborations [spros pa phyogs gcig 'gog pa], should become the actual foundation for the path of the greater vehicle. In this way ego-clinging would be averted once beings had comprehended the buddha nature through the extensive topic [rgya chen po'i gtam] that all phenomena are emptiness [stong pa nyid], devoid of attributes [mtshan ma med pa], and without aspiration [smon pa med pa]."

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[45] The first five followers of the Buddha who became arhats: 1) kun shes kauṇḍinya, 2) rta thul, 3) rlangs pa, 4) ming chen, 5) bzang ldan.

[46] *Nyingmapa School of Tibetan Buddhism*, page 153, folios 62b-63a.

[47] pages 153-154, folios

The third promulgation, 'the dharma wheel of excellent analysis', had the following five perfect circumstances: 1) the perfect teacher, Buddha himself; 2) the perfect place, Vaishali [yangs pa can]; 3) the perfect time, the 15th day of the fourth month of the lunar calendar; 4) the perfect entourage, those who belong to the group of the Mahāyāna followers [theg pa chen po'i rigs chen]; and 5) the perfect teachings, the teachings on clear distinctions [legs pa rnam par phye ba'i chos 'khor].

Düjom Rinpoche writes:[48] "Concerning the third promulgation: The Tathāgata's perseverence was not interrupted merely by the second promulgation of the dharma-wheel. Subsequently the teacher promulgated the final turning of the dharma wheel, directing his intention towards the nucleus of the path of the greater vehicle [theg pa chen po'i lam gyi snying po], and actually revealed [dngos su ston pa] the ultimate truth for which there is no synonym [rnam grangs]. This he did after opposing all bases for the views concerning being and non-being and the like by causing sentient beings to penetrate the objective range of the Buddha [sangs rgyas kyi yul la 'dzud par byed pa] through the topic of that irreversible promulgation [phyir mi ldog pa'i 'khor lo] and through topics [gtam] concerning the utter purity of the three spheres (of subject, object and their interaction) ['khor gsum yongs su dag pa]."

A Buddha teaches according to the capacities of beings. If a buddha were to appear in a saṃbhogakāya realm, in which all beings were bodhisattvas from the first level onward, there would be no need for him to teach extensively the teachings of the first and second dharma wheel, which are called the 'teachings of the preceding meaning' [drang don gyi chos]. He would mainly teach on the ultimate meaning, the teachings of the third dharma wheel.

The various levels and forms of teachings are infinite in number because the ideas, concepts and delusions of beings are infinite. A perfectly enlightened buddha knows the disposition of beings [khams mkhyen pa], their characters [rang bzhin mkhyen pa], their thoughts [bsam pa mkhyen pa], their underlying patterns [bag la nyal mkhyen pa], the right time to teach them [dus mkhyen pa] and the appropriate remedy for their delusion [gnyen po mkhyen po].

If an unqualified teacher teaches the dharma in a way that the student does not appreciate, or if an unqualified teacher gives a teaching for which the student is not ready, then the student's expectation and the teacher's intention have diverged. The teachings do not have any benefit, either for the student or for the teacher. That gap between student and teacher is considered to be caused by māra, the evil one. 'Māra' here means that something has come between, something has caused an interruption or an obstacle. An omniscient buddha teaches from the position of total knowledge; therefore he does not experience these obstacles when teaching. His teaching is in utter harmony with the recipient's mind—with his wishes, inclinations, disposition and capacity.

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48 page 154-155, folio 63b-64a

Therefore, the benefit of requesting the buddhas to teach is immense. The greatest generosity is the gift of dharma. Teaching sentient beings is the most meritorious of all gifts. It is the king of generosity. When the Buddha teaches in response to a request for teaching, the person who asked for the teachings will receive the entire merit brought about by this teaching for all time.

Imagine that you are the one who first requested the Buddha to teach and that, based on your request, he taught throughout his entire life-time to gods, humans and non-human beings, thus leading countless sentient beings to liberation and complete enlightenment. Imagine the inconceivable amount of merit that a single buddha generates in infinite world systems, all because of your request.

Imagine that you present the buddhas with the thousand-spoked dharma wheel [gser kyi 'khor lo rtsibs stong dang ldan pa] and the auspicious right-turning conch shell [bkra shis pa'i dung g.yas su 'khyil ba], and that you then request them to teach. The thousand-spoked dharma wheel symbolizes the unhindered power of a world monarch, who rules the entire world. The Buddha, like the world monarch, conquers the entire world by turning the wheel of dharma with his unlimited spiritual power.

The right-turning conch shell symbolizes the spread of the beautiful sound of dharma throughout all directions. It is also a symbol of Buddha's speech, endowed with sixty aspects. Imagine that you present the wheel and the conch to all the buddhas of the three times and ten directions in the same manner that the Bodhisattva Samantabhadra presents his infinite offerings. If one cannot visualize the request in this way, simply requesting all buddhas with heart-felt devotion to teach the dharma to all sentient beings is perfectly sufficient.

Śākyamuni Buddha experienced countless difficulties and hardships to gain knowledge and insight. In former lifetimes he endured ordeals such as one thousand nails being driven into his body merely to gain a single four line verse of truth [legs par bshad pa / chos tshigs]. On another occasion he endured wicked people carving one thousand holes in his body, filling them with oil and lighting one thousand lamps. Countless stories are told about the hardships the Buddha endured while on the bodhisattva path. It is said that only a bodhisattva who has reached at least the first bodhisattva level is allowed to sacrifice his own body for the sake of others or for the sake of the dharma.

By requesting the buddhas to turn the wheel of the dharma you are also requesting all buddhas in all infinite world-systems to dispell the darkness of ignorance of all sentient beings by teaching the dharma. Make the following request, "Today, from the bottom of my heart and with folded hands, I request all the buddhas and bodhisattvas who dwell in all the infinite buddha fields, all those who possess the wisdom eye, to turn the wheel of dharma of all nine vehicles. Please shine the lamp of the dharma, dispelling all the darkness of ignorance in this world."

At this present moment, infinite buddhas are dwelling in infinite world-systems. In our present world system our gurus or spiritual guides [dge ba'i bshes gnyen] are the representatives [tshab] of Buddha Śākyamuni. They turn the wheel of the dharma

because through their wisdom [shes rab] they have realized the nature of the dharma and because they are motivated by compassion [snying rje] for all sentient beings. By requesting them to turn the wheel of the dharma, we are ensuring that the dharma continues to benefit beings.

The dharma is something that must be internalized and processed in one's mind. The dharma only stays in the mind of a person able to see its value. The dharma should not be easily passed on to others without authorization. It is not merely some interesting information, nor a subject of casual conversation or mere entertainment. The dharma is designed to remain in and transform a person's mind. Talking about the dharma without authorization will diminish its blessing power. When the blessing of the dharma is not in your mind, you will not be able to retain the words and meaning. Moreover, the blessing power of the dharma easily dissipates if the dharma is taught to the wrong students. Great masters sometimes need to be repeatedly requested before they will agree to give a certain teaching. You are asking them to share with you what they themselves have internalized. You are asking them to share their very heart with you.

**Text section 56 / stanza 6:**

Since the lay practitioner Cunda [dge bsnyen tsun ta / skul byed] requested the Buddha not to enter into nirvāṇa, Buddha prolonged his life for three months.[49] This request gained Cunda the great merit that was generated by the Buddha's teaching for three additional months. Toward the end of Buddha Śākyamuni's life, Ānanda had the opportunity to request the Buddha to remain for a very long time, but the influence of Māra prevented Ānanda from making this request.[50]

After the Buddha passed into nirvāṇa, the dharma was maintained by spiritual guides, people who upheld the doctrine [bstan 'dzin skyes bu]. They taught the dharma to their students. Without them, the dharma would have ceased to exist long ago. Therefore, we should pray for the longevity of all masters and teachers of the dharma. Keeping this in mind, request the buddhas of the ten directions and three times, all the gurus, spiritual guides and teachers, to remain for countless aeons, teaching and spreading the dharma.

Although the buddhas are beyond birth and death, they still manifest, to the perception of sentient beings, as though passing into nirvāṇa. The wisdom mind of the

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[49] See *sangs rgyas bcom ldan 'das kyi rnam thar*, page 456; *History of Buddhism*, page 66.

[50] See *sangs rgyas bcom ldan 'das kyi rnam thar*, pages 453-454; *Thus have I heard*, page 244-254. Another person named Cunda, the son of a blacksmith from Kuśinagara [rtsva mchog gi mgar ba'i bu tsun da], offered Buddha his last meal. At that time Buddha said that offering the last meal to a bodhisattva just before he attains enlightenment and offering the last meal to a buddha just before he passes into nirvāṇa have an equal karmic fruition. See *sangs rgyas bcom ldan 'das kyi rnam thar*, pages 466-467; *dad pa'i nyin byed*, page 614-615. The scriptures mention several people by the name Cunda, which are hard to distinguish; *History of Buddhism*, page 53.

buddhas is beyond birth and death. When you supplicate the buddhas to remain, you are supplicating that they remain in our perception so that ordinary beings like us can meet them and request teachings. The longer the buddhas remain the more they can lead beings to liberation from suffering. Without our gurus and teachers, the dharma would dissipate. Should the dharma disappear from this world, the path to liberation and perfect enlightenment would be gone. When asking the buddhas and masters to remain for a long time, we are actually making the aspiration that the dharma remain for a long time [bstan pa yun ring gnas pa'i smon lam]. Thus, requesting the buddhas not to enter into nirvāṇa is also called an 'aspiration for the doctrine to spread' [bstan rgyas smon lam]. The Buddhist teaching does not dwell in books and scriptures but in the minds of the buddhas, bodhisattvas, gurus and sentient beings.

As mentioned above, the buddha dharma has two aspects, the 'dharma of statements' and the 'dharma of realization'. One should understand that the wisdom of the statements and realization, which resides in the minds of the buddha and the bodhisattvas, constitutes the sublime dharma. 'Dharma' refers to a mind that has realized wisdom. The Buddhist books and scriptures are mere representations or substitutes [tshab] of the sublime dharma, but not the real dharma itself.

The bodhisattvas, masters and teachers, who live nowadays, hold many words and meanings of the dharma in their minds, so the teaching of the Buddha is truly present within them. Therefore, it is crucial that they remain for a long time. We can learn and practice the teaching of the Buddha only for as long as it remains in this world. The dharma depends upon qualified masters, who are willing to teach and qualified students who are willing to learn and practice. Considerable merit is necessary before such an auspicious situation can come about. Even these days we often find that qualified teachers have died at a young age, while spreading the dharma. In addition, there are excellent masters who do not teach at all because they have no qualified students.

To have enough merit to meet qualified masters, and to become qualified students, we must make a lot of aspirations. Great masters, who have developed meditation experience and realization, are most often advanced in age. They are very rare in this day and age. A great master is like a mold of the dharma, leaving his imprint in the mind of a qualified student. Even if you are fortunate enough to become a student of such a master, he might die before your own education and training is complete. When a great master dies, a great part of the dharma dies with him. This situation makes the spread of the genuine dharma difficult. To meet a genuine master and to receive the precious teachings depends entirely on your merit and aspirations. Never stop praying for the longevity of the masters and thus for the longevity of the dharma, which these masters embody.

**Text section 57:**

In the time of Buddha Śākyamuni, it was customary for the Buddha and his entourage to be invited for lunch at the houses of his sponsors. At the end of the lunch the sponsor always requested the Buddha to dedicate the root of virtue gained to him.

Buddha then spoke lines of dedication so that the sponsor would accomplish whatever he wished. Buddha also made a dedication prayer that throughout all his future lifetimes thoughts generating bad karma would never arise in the sponsor's mind, that he or she would enter the path to liberation and omniscience, would gradually gain liberation and that ultimately wisdom would be born in his or her mind.

*Dedication* [bsngo ba], confession [bshags pa], offering [mchod pa] and generosity [sbyin pa] are almost the same, in that you are giving something away in order to overcome clinging and fixation. Confession is made in order to destroy your fixations on negativity [sdug cha la 'dzin pa]. We present offerings to remove our clinging to what we hold most dear [mchog tu 'dzin pa]. To let go of clinging to material things of which we are fond, we practice generosity. We gather virtue [dge ba] and merit [bsod names] through all these practices. In order to assure that we do not develop attachment and fixation to virtue and merit [dge ba dang bsod nams bdag du ma 'dzin pa], we dedicate these as well to the welfare of others. Thus, our dedication of virtue guarantees that we abandon any clinging to the virtue and merit we have accumulated.

Furthermore, compounded virtue ['du byas kyi dge ba] is easily destroyed by anger. Even great virtue, like building a stūpa, can be totally consumed during a single moment of anger. However, by dedicating the virtue as soon as we have created it, the virtue can never be destroyed or lost, not even through anger. Once we have disowned our virtue through dedication, and have thereby given it away, we can no longer lose it. If, on the other hand, we cling to our spiritual attainments, qualities and virtues, a single moment of anger can easily cause them to dissipate.

One might wonder if a dedication prayer, offering our virtues and merit to other sentient beings, actually reaches these other beings or not. The strength of the waves [rba rlabs] or power [nus pa] of our virtue depends on its magnitude. Powerful waves of virtue and merit can extend through infinite space, while radiation from minor virtues is not as strong. The attitude with which virtuous acts are embraced determine the strength of the virtue itself. This is fully explained in text sections 39 through 49 of Khenpo Kunpal's commentary.

We know from physical science that all objects, each and every atom, has a wave, some kind of radiation. The law of interdependent origination teaches that all things are connected through causes, conditions and effects. Throwing a stone into a great lake creates many waves. Like the waves and reactions that occur on the physical level, thoughts, emotions, words and actions also cause waves and reactions. A single virtuous thought might have an effect that lasts for aeons. An angry thought might influence hundreds of thousands of people, causing unfathomable suffering to countless beings.

The same is true of dedicating virtue and merit. Your dedication might sometimes reach countless beings, at other times only a few. Always, therefore, make your dedication for the sake of all sentient beings, so that all beings will attain

enlightenment. This scope of dedication ensures that the root of virtue you have accumulated will never be lost.

The object of the dedication of merit is all infinite sentient beings. We dedicate our merit in order to free all sentient beings from all suffering and its causes. Such a thought has unfathomable power. When it is said that the qualities of the dharma are inconceivable [chos kyi yon tan bsam mi khyab], this actually means that the power of virtue is inconceivable [dge ba'i nus pa], as is the power of mind [sems kyi nus pa].

If you generate positive energy towards a person for many years, the power of your thought alone can make that individual feel happy. This effect is even greater when such positive energy is generated by an enlightened master. Every practitioner has had the experience of feeling elated when a great master directs energy toward him or her. Or in the opposite case, many people have the experience of feeling uncomfortable if a powerful negative person directs anger toward them.

Regretting ['gyod pa] a virtuous deed annihilates the virtue as does performing a virtuous act for the sake of fame and renown. For this reason we should keep our virtuous deeds secret. Dedications and aspirations can also be perverted as when someone might pray, "May I become a powerful politician in the future,"or "May I defeat all my enemies." People making such dedications are using whatever merit they have accumulated for perverted aims.

Generally, Mahāyāna dedication is a dedication of virtue so that all sentient beings attain the level of buddhahood. The Mahāyāna dedication prayer is, "Through the root of this virtue may all sentient beings attain the level of unexcelled enlightenment, the level of buddhahood." Merit dedicated in this way will remain until all beings have attained enlightenment, which means forever. Even if you yourself attain enlightenment, the merit you have accumulated will remain, never being exhausted.

The strongest way to dedicate merit is called 'a dedication that does not conceptualise the three factors' ['khor gsum dmigs pa med pa'i bsngo ba]. This dedication is done while recognizing the buddha nature. In that recognition there is no subject who dedicates the merit, no merit to be dedicated and no object who receives the merit. A mind that has truly realized the buddha nature actually does pervade the totality of space [nam mkha' yongs rdzogs] so the dedication of such a mind actually reaches all beings in all universes. This is the most powerful form of dedication.

A dualistic mind [sems], a mind which has not recognized its buddha nature, lacks the capacity to pervade the totality of space. A dedication done in the framework of a dualistic mind therefore, is always a conceptual dedication, while a dedication done by a mind which has realized the buddha nature is 'non-conceptual' [dmigs pa med pa], 'transcendent' or 'supramundane' ['jig rten las 'das pa], not mingled with any mind-poisons [dug dang ma 'dres pa].

Here, in this chapter of the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra, it is taught that dedication functions to give birth to bodhicitta in one's mind. For the birth of bodhicitta one must train one's mind in the four immeasurables [tshad med bzhi]: immeasurable kindness [byams pa tshad med], immeasurable compassion [snying rje tshad med], immeasurable

joy [dga' ba tshad med] and immeasurable equanimity [btang snyoms tshad med].[51] The reason this training is necessary is that the very root of bodhicitta is compassion. Therefore, in this context, dedication and compassion are shown to be in harmony. Thus, sincere dedication is born from a mind of compassion.

In Asaṅga's Sūtrālaṃkāra, Maitreya said, "Compassion is said to be the very root of this (bodhicitta)." He meant that in order to develop bodhicitta in one's mind, it is crucial to meditate on compassion first. Compassion is the basis for bodhicitta, but compassion is not identical with bodhicitta. Whoever has bodhicitta also has compassion, but not everyone who has compassion has bodhicitta. Compassion is relatively easy to generate, whereas generating bodhicitta requires great merit.

Mahāyāna dedication is not possible without compassion. One dedicates one's virtue and merit to liberate all sentient beings from suffering and to establish them on the level of perfect and complete enlightenment. Thus, since bodhicitta is based on compassion, dedication and compassion are very similar.

**Text section 58 / stanza 7:**

You dedicate all the merit you have amassed through the practice of the seven sections as well as all the merit you have amassed or will amass throughout the three times. This is an interesting concept. Of course you can dedicate the merit you have accumulated in past lifetimes and also the merit of your present life. But dedication also includes the merit one will amass in future lifetimes. You dedicate all your merit so that the sufferings of saṃsāra, and especially the suffering of the three lower realms, are removed. This seventh stanza is both a dedication [bsngo ba] and an aspiration [smon lam].

**Text sections 59-60 / stanza 8**

Birth in the god realm is the outcome of virtuous conduct that accords with the ten virtuous deeds [dge ba bcu]. Birth in the asura realm is the outcome of non-virtuous conduct. Gods and asuras represent good and evil in this world. If sentient beings do not live according to the ten virtuous actions [dge ba bcu], the gods are naturally defeated and the asuras are victorious. The negative conduct of beings increases the prevalence of demons and spirits in the world. Negative forces achieve greater power and influence. The waves [ba rlabs] or energy [nus pa] of these negative forces bring about various forms of diseases. Metaphorically the texts describe this as follows, *from the breath of the asuras manifest red clouds of illness from which in turn arise the eighteen classes of disease causing spirits*. These are often diseases that no medicine can cure.

"When a Buddha Bhagavan, a pratyekabuddha, or a universal monarch ['khor los sgyur ba'i rgyal po; skr. cakravartin] appears in the world, the asuras do not think of fighting

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[51] In this context btang snyoms must be translated as 'equanimity' or 'being equal' [cha snyoms]. The Buddha regards all sentient beings as equal [cha snyoms du lta ba].

the gods. If they do fight, the gods will be victorious. If there is much meritorious action [dge ba, skr. kushala] in the world, the gods will be victorious; if there is the opposite, the asuras will gain the victory. Hence the gods protect those who lead a meritorious life."[52]

In this stanza you dedicate your merit and pray that you yourself manifest as excellent medicine able to pacify all these diseases. Generally, medicines are considered the result of conduct that accords with the ten virtuous actions. Medicine manifests in this world due to the power of virtue accumulated by yourself and other sentient beings. The buddhas and bodhisattvas are the beings who have most intensely accumulated vast masses of virtue. So we should consider all medicine as the blessing and compassion of the buddhas and the bodhisattvas, the blessing of the three jewels as well as the positive power of the general good karma of all sentient beings. The very root of medicine is knowledge [shes rab] and compassion [snying rje]. Therefore, you dedicate your merit so these excellent medicines that remove all diseases are easily available to all sentient beings.

Furthermore, you dedicate your merit so you yourself may become a physician who administers medicine to all beings in need. The practice of a physician is considered most meritorious.

You should also dedicate your merit so you may take rebirth as a nurse, a helper to the sick. Even our teacher Buddha Śākyamuni acted as a nurse for a sick monk. With a bamboo stick Buddha personally removed the monk's soiled robes, washed him, gave him new robes and nursed him back to health. Just like our teacher Buddha Śākyamuni nursed the sick, all his disciples should follow his example and care for the sick. Serving the sick is very meritorious. Dedicate your merit and pray that you may become a nurse to all sentient beings.

For this reason Buddhist monasteries encourage the study of medicine and the building of hospitals [sman khang]. The monastic hospitals of Tibet were open to the public. Medical treatment was free of charge. In fact, the monastic tradition itself largely maintained the science of medicine. In these medical centers both monks and lay-people could study medicine. Lay-people who were sick received diagnosis and treatment. However, these were not hospitals where the patients could stay. They received treatment and returned home to be cared for by their families. A bodhisattva considered it extremely meritorious to help the sick.[53]

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52 See *Prince Jing Gim's Textbook*, page 31-32.

53 The seven kinds of merit that arise from material offerings [rdzas las byung ba'i bsod nams bya ba'i dngos po bdun] are: 1) To offer a place for teaching and practicing the dharma to the saṃgha of the four directions [phyogs bzhi'i dge slong gi dge 'dun la kun dga' ra ba 'bul bar byed pa], 2) to build a temple hall [gtsug lag khang rtsig pa], 3) to offer beds and seats [mal cha dang stan 'bul ba], 4) to offer continuous provisions ['tsho ba nar ma 'bul ba], 5) to give donations to travelers who arrive unexpectedly [mgron po glo bur du 'gro 'ong byed pa la sbyin pa gtong ba], 6) to give donations to the sick and their nurses [nad pa dang nad g.yog la

In text section 60 a story from one of the Buddha's previous lives is mentioned in which he was born as the son of a Brahmin and called 'Rainfall Kid' [khye'u chu 'bebs]. At that time the country was experiencing a severe drought. Due to the aspirations of 'Rainfall Kid' the rains returned and medicinal plants grew again. (See thar mdo ???).

This eighth stanza is a dedication for pacifying diseases [nad zhi ba'i ched du bsngo ba]. You not only pray and dedicate the merit for the sick in this world. The stanza also implies that you should actually help the sick whenever you have a chance to do so.

Buddha predicted that the lifespan of beings would become shorter, that their wealth would decrease and that famine, plague and weapons would spread more and more. Buddha predicted a time called 'the three intermediate periods' [bskal pa bar ma gsum]: the period of famine [mu ge'i bskal pa], the period of plague [nad gyi bskal pa], and the period of weapon [mtshon gyi bskal pa].

During the period of plague human beings' lifespan will decrease to only twenty years. Each individual will experience a period of seven months and seven days [zhag bdun zla ba bdun], where strong infectious and epidemic diseases ['go ba'i yams nad] will spread. As these diseases have no cure, most people will die. The eighth stanza addresses this particular 'intermediate period of plague' [nad gyi bskal pa bar ma].

**Text sections 61-62 / stanza 9:**

Stanza nine is a dedication to pacify hunger and thirst [bkres skom zhi ba'i ched du bsngo ba]. You dedicate all your merit so that all sentient beings who are tormented by hunger and thirst will always have an abundant supply of food and drink. You pray for a continuous rain of food and drink to relieve their suffering. It is said that famine will arise in this world to the extent that the conduct of the ten non-virtuous actions spreads among humans.

Among the three intermediate periods, this stanza addresses 'the period of famine' [mu ge'i bskal pa]. At that time it is predicted that the human lifespan will decrease to thirty years. A great famine will occur, lasting seven years, seven months and seven days [zhag bdun zla ba bdun lo bdun]. During that time there will be three periods where people have less and less to eat. These are the periods of 'the hidden eaters' [gab tshe ba], 'the spoon eaters' [thur mas mas 'tsho ba] and 'the bare bone eaters' [rus gong dkar po pa].

During the time of 'the hidden eaters' food will be extremely scarce and people will treasure like jewels a vessel with a few grains. Fearing that other people will steal their food, they keep it very secret and hidden. During the time of 'the spoon eaters' food will be so rare that people will only be allowed to eat an amount of food that can be measured with a spoon. The few grains that they have will be cooked as a soup and

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sbyin pa gtong ba], 7) to offer alms inside the temple hall when difficult conditions such as storm and rain have arisen [rlung dang char ba la sogs pa yul ngan byung ba'i tshe gtsug lag khang gi nang du bsod snyoms 'bul ba]. See *ston pa śākya thub pa'i rnams thar*, pages 157-158.

each person will receive only a few spoonfuls. Other people will watch to ensure that no one gets too much or too little. During the time of 'the bare bone eaters' food will be even more scarce. People will be forced to cook the bare bones of the dead and live on human bone soup. You should dedicate the merit you have accumulated in order that you yourself will become food and drink for people during that intermediate period of famine [ mu ge'i bskal par bar ma].

When human lifespan has decreased to only ten years, 'the intermediate period of weapons' [mtshon gyi bskal pa bar ma] is predicted. During their brief lives human beings will experience a period of seven days [zhag bdun] during which their minds will be filled with strong aggression. Whatever they touch will turn into weapons and they will kill each other on sight. Pray that at that time you will have a power of merit so strong that you will be able to transform their weapons into a rain a flowers. Although Śāntideva's root text does not mention the period of weapons, knowledge of this period is implied in stanzas eight and nine.

We must realize that all these sufferings are already rampant in our present world. Many people suffer from horrible infectious diseases for which there is no cure. Famines often kill hundreds of thousands of people; and there is always a war going on in some part of the world. Dedicate all your merit and make aspirations that these sufferings may cease.

To prevent oneself and others from being reborn in an area or age where the suffering of these 'three intermediate aeons' is prevalent, offer various kinds of medicine to the three jewels. You can make a smoke offering [bsangs], burning many kinds of medicinal herbs and plants such as arura, white and red sandalwood and the like. You can also throw these substances into lakes and rivers. Offering a coating of saffron color to a stūpa in conjunction with aspirations will help reduce diseases in this world. All these activities will benefit many beings and pacify their diseases now as well as in the future.

To protect all sentient beings from being harmed by weapons, the texts recommend offering various kinds of weapons to the three jewels, or donating sharp tools such as needles, knives, scissors, hammers and so on to the saṃgha for their daily use. Similarly, the traditional offering of food and drink to the saṃgha helps prevent famine. Together with these offerings, it is crucial to make aspirations that neither you nor any other sentient being will ever take rebirth in a time or place of disease, famine or weapons.

**Text section 63 / stanza 10:**

Stanza ten is a dedication to pacify poverty [dbul phongs zhi ba'i ched du bsngo ba]. You pray that you yourself will become an inexhaustible treasure trove that pacifies all suffering of poverty and that you will be able to provide all sentient beings with whatever they may need. Pray that you become whatever they wish for—be it food, drink, medicine, grain, beds, jewellery and so forth. Pray that they will obtain whatever they require in an effortless way.

If you dedicate a root of virtue according to the Mahāyāna tradition, then even a tiny root of virtue will increase greatly. Furthermore, even if this tiny virtue bears only a temporary fruition, the root of virtue will nonetheless never be exhausted. Dedication is therefore a most skillful means of the bodhisattvas.

**Text sections 64-66:**

Mind training [blo sbyang] is the cause that leads to the development of bodhicitta. Training one's mind is like mental exercise [sems kyi lus rtsal]. Through repeated physical exercise, one's body becomes strong and flexible. The skill of the body is developed [lus rtsal sbyang]. In the same way, the skill of the mind, called mind-training [sems kyi rtsal sbyang ba la blo sbyang ba zer], can be enhanced.

Through repeated mind-training in the antidotes to ego-clinging [bdag 'dzin gyi gnyen po'i phyogs], you become able to free yourself from ego-clinging [bdag 'dzin], and eventually realize the wisdom of egolessness [bdag med rtogs pa'i shes rab].

Bodhicitta is an attitude of utterly selfless service for the sake of other beings. In order for bodhicitta to arise in your mind, you must first cut the clinging to your personal wants, needs and welfare. As long as your aim in life is to accomplish your own welfare and happiness [rang gi bde don], bodhicitta cannot arise in your mind.

All sentient beings naturally want the best for themselves, having a natural affinity for self-interest [rang don kyi 'khri ba].[54] Without having to be told, sentient beings automatically pursue their personal aims and benefits [rang don la 'jug pa]. However, as long as you entertain the thoughts "I need" and "I want", you will not be able to benefit others.

If your hand is glued to your own chest, you cannot extend it to others. Only when you have freed your hand will you be able to stretch forth your arm. Only when you have destroyed the egotistic motivation of merely pursuing your own personal benefit [rang don] can you consider the benefit and welfare of others [gzhan phan gyi bsam pa]. How should you train your mind? As Khenpo Kunpal quotes in his commentary:

> Because the number of beings is boundless,
> The wish to benefit them must be equally so.
> Even if one's activities for the welfare of others have no power,
> Still one must always maintain this motivation.
> Whoever has such a motivation
> Has spontaneously engaged in this (boundless merit).
>
> sems can khams ni dpag med la
> phan 'dod de ni de 'dra'o

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[54] To have a natural affinity for self-interest [rang don kyi 'khri ba] means to pursue one's personal aims and benefits [rang don la 'jug pa]

gzhan phan las la mthu med kyang
de yi bsam pa rtag tu bya
gang la bsam pa de yod pa
de ni de la don gyis zhugs

Beings are numberless. No one can count all the sentient beings that pervade the boundless universes. Comparing the numbers of sentient beings to the particles of dust in our universe, even the incalculable number of dust motes seems small and insignificant. The actual number of sentient beings is beyond count. This *boundless* [dpag med] number of beings is the object for your mind-training [blo sbyang ba'i yul].

If you want to train your mind in altruistic motivation, no limited group of beings will suffice. The magnitude of your wish to benefit beings must equal the infinite multitude of beings. Since beings are incalculable, the bodhisattvas must have an equally incalculable plentitude of beneficent intentions [phan 'dogs kyi bsam pa grangs med pa].

Were someone to ask, "How can you possibly benefit such an incalculable number of beings?" you should answer, "Even though I lack the power to actually help all sentient beings, nevertheless I will constantly train in this vast intention to benefit them all." The bodhisattva constantly develops the thought, "I will free all sentient beings from suffering and the causes of suffering and I will establish them on the level of complete and perfect enlightenment."

It is understood that a beginning bodhisattva cannot actually help all sentient beings. For us it is sufficient to imagine that we are helping them all. The beginning bodhisattva needs to develop confidence and courage [dpa'] in the motivation mentioned above.

Not only does the beginning bodhisattva lack the power to actually establish all sentient beings on the level of perfect buddhahood, he or she cannot even fathom the infinite number of sentient beings. Nevertheless, a beginning bodhisattva must constantly train in developing this vast attitude.

Were one to ask, "What is the use and benefit of developing such a vast attitude?" three reasons can be given:

1) The moment you develop the noble attitude to benefit all sentient beings, this noble attitude will immediately benefit you [bsam pa bzang po 'di rang la phan gi 'dug]. Generating positive or negative thoughts, primarily helps or harms yourself. The positive or negative energy you radiate, immediately returns to you.

2) Through the power of interdependent arising all sentient beings will receive the blessing [rten 'brel gi dbang gis byin brlabs thob gi 'dug] of that noble attitude.

3) By constantly training in such a vast and noble motivation, once you have attained enlightenment, you will actually engage in such vast activity [phrin las spro thub gi 'dug]. A person who develops this immeasurably beneficial attitude concurrently [don gyis / shugs kyis / zur gyis] gains the merit of helping all beings, without yet being able

to accomplish this in actuality [dngos su]. A bodhisattva can benefit beings on three levels: directly, indirectly or in the future [dngos shugs brgyud gsum]. For example, when a bodhisattva actually [dngos su] saves the life of a sentient being, he or she has as well [shugs kyis / zhar byung] prolonged that being's life and has provided that being an opportunity to practice virtue in the future.

**Text sections 67-68:**

The *three bases of ego-clinging* [bdag tu 'dzin pa'i gzhi gsum] are your body [lus], your wealth [longs spyod] and the accumulations of virtue [dge tshogs] that you have amassed throughout the three times. Only after attaining the first bodhisattva level is one truly able to sacrifice one's body for the sake of others. As long as you hold fear in your mind, you should never sacrifice your body.

If an ordinary being is suddenly so overwhelmed with compassion that he wishes, with no fear or doubt, to give his body or a part of his body for the sake of others, he will be able to do so, even before he has attained the first bodhisattva level.

A beginning bodhisattva is allowed to offer his or her wealth [longs spyod] and dedicate his virtue [dge ba] and merit [bsod nams], but should not give away his life or mutilate his body for the sake of others. If a beginner were to sacrifice his body, this would be no more than *a mere imitation of true generosity* [sbyin pa'i gzugs brnyan] since he has not truly overcome his attachment to his body.

Generosity requires the true spirit of generosity. Unless one has a level of realization such that one can truly sacrifice one's life for the sake of others, merely losing your life is pointless. Only if attachment to one's body and life are totally overcome, can one genuinely practice self-sacrifice. So long as one remains attached to one's body and life, self-sacrifice degenerates into self-mutilation. That is what the phrase *a mere imitation of generosity* [sbyin pa'i gzugs brnyan] actually means.

A bodhisattva does not practice self-mutilation, but practices rather a generosity that meets the needs of others. There is a story about one of the previous lives of Śāriputra Śāriputra, Buddha's principal student. Once asked to cut off his hand for someone, he cut off his left hand. The person then told him he did not want the left hand but the right. At that moment Śāriputra realized the extreme difficulty of the bodhisattva path. Realizing how impossible it is to truly meet the needs and wishes of all beings, from that moment onward he gave up the bodhisattva path and became a śrāvaka. This story of Śāriputra's previous lifetime is used to illustrate that sacrificing one's body before reaching the first bodhisattva level leads to the danger of abandoning the bodhisattva path altogether.

Practicing generosity without the truly 'giving mind' that characterizes a bodhisattva is not beneficial. Therefore, you must first train your mind in the generous attitude of giving. The moment a thought such as "my body" comes to mind, think, "I offer it." The very instant you think, "I want this or that," think instead, "I offer it." Even if you are poor in wealth, you can train in offering the three bases for ego-clinging: your body, your possessions, and your merit.

Practicing like this you will never *contravene* your bodhisattva vows [byang chub sems dpa'i sdom pa dang 'gal ba med]. Simply being poor does not prevent you from practicing the transcendental perfection of generosity. A beggar is perfectly able to offer every single enjoyment he sees, hears, smells, tastes, touches, feels or thinks of. He can offer his body and all his accumulations of virtue.

The teachings in this portion of the text contain many extraordinary features [thun mong ma yin pa'i khyad chos]. The central point concerns developing a generous attitude. This does not depend upon whether or not one actually offers something material. One must train in generosity beyond hope and fear, with no expectation of reward or fear of loss. Most people expect to receive something in return for a generous act. Their practice of generosity has become an investment with an expectation for profit and reward.

Developing a generous mind-set [gtong sems] relaxes ego-clinging [bdag 'dzin klod po gso gi red]. Such practice creates the favorable conditions [mthun rkyen] for easily realizing the wisdom of egolessness [bdag med rtogs pa'i shes rab]. The power which creates such positive conditions is called 'merit' [bsod nams].

If a practitioner has truly developed a generous frame of mind, the realization of egolessness will dawn naturally. Egolessness is realized once all fixations ['dzin pa] have vanished from the mind. As it is said, "The true purpose of all the teachings is to cut through fixations" [chos thams cad 'dzin pa gcad pa'i phyir du yin].

When, out of devotion, you present offerings to the buddhas, you do not benefit the buddhas in the slightest, but you greatly benefit yourself, as you thereby gain inconceivable merit. When, out of compassion, you practice generosity toward all sentient beings, they are benefited through your generosity. In both cases you are practicing giving, making offerings to the buddhas and donations to sentient beings. A beginner finds it easier to practice making offerings to the buddhas than to donate their material wealth to sentient beings.

Knowing that the buddhas are the supreme of all objects [yul], it is easy to make offerings to them when you are motivated by devotion. You may also be motivated by renunciation. Realizing that your possessions are actually a cause for suffering, you therefore wish to offer everything you have to the buddhas. However, never present offerings to the buddhas because of compassion or pity for them. The objects of your compassion must be sentient beings. Both making offerings to the buddhas and practicing generosity toward all sentient beings have the purpose of cutting through grasping and fixations ['dzin pa].

**Text section 69:**

The Tibetan term for 'body' [lus] connotes 'support', 'basis' [yod sa / sdad sa] or 'vessel' [snod]. As speech and mind are based upon the body, it can be considered a 'support'. Here, in this context, 'body' refers to body, speech and mind [lus ngag yid gsum]. Among the three bases, body is the one most cherished.

A great teaching called 'Chö,' 'Cutting' or 'Cutter' [gcod], came from India to Tibet. This practice is the special teaching on how to overcome fixating on and clinging to the body. Certain spirits and demons are particularly drawn to the human body. They want to possess, to take over the bodies of human beings, to devour human flesh and drink human blood. They are either motivated by stupidity, desire or anger. Just as human beings find the beautiful skin of a wild animal attractive, these spirits would like to possess a human body. The practice of 'Chö' teaches us to voluntarily surrender our body to these spirits and demons.

Ordinary people think: "I am my body and this body is myself." They also think: "This is my wealth, this is my virtue," thereby identifying themselves with their body, possessions and spiritual attainments. Cutting through these fixations and attachments by training one's mind in giving is therefore crucial. To cut one's attachments to the body, one should practice 'Chö'. Paltrül Rinpoche said that this section of the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra includes the essence of all the teachings on 'Chö'.

The three bases for ego-clinging [bdag tu 'dzin pa'i gzhi gsum], the three bases we most cherish [shin tu gces par 'dzin pa'i gzhi gsum], are also called 'the three bases of possessiveness' [yongs su bzung ba'i gzhi gsum]. The first base is one's own body, the second one's possessions and the third the virtue that one has amassed throughout the three times.

Clinging to one's possessions [longs spyod] is called the outer ego-clinging [phyi'i bdag 'dzin]. Clinging to one's body [lus] is called the inner ego-clinging [nang gi bdag bdag 'dzin]. And clinging to the virtue one has amassed throughout the three times [dus gsum dge ba] is called the secret ego-clinging [gsang ba'i bdag 'dzin].

The inner ego-clinging is more difficult to overcome than the outer, and the secret ego-clinging is the most difficult to overcome. This is because people fixate upon their personal qualities [yon tan], even if they are spiritual qualities. Train to abandon all three bases of ego-clinging for the sake of all beings, for their temporary and ultimate happiness.

The Vajrayana practice of 'pure perception' [dag snang] is designed to enable the practitioner to relinquish all fixations on phenomena. The practitioner maintains the view that all sights are divine forms [lha], all sounds are mantra [sngags] and all thoughts and emotions are awareness [rig pa]. One who is truly able to maintain that view has no fixations to any of the three bases, to the body, to wealth, or to merit. Such a person no longer entertains any thought of 'mine' and 'yours', and is free from fixation on any substantial reality [dngos 'dzin].

**Text section 70-72 / stanza 11:**

In stanza eleven the practitioner is admonished to develop the following motivation: "From the depth of my heart, I freely give away my body, my riches, my food, my clothes, my possessions, my spouse and my virtue of the three times—everything I am attached to, everything that I consider to be mine. I will give all this away for the

temporary welfare [gnas skabs kyi phan pa] and ultimate happiness [mthar thug gi bde ba] of all sentient beings. The manner in which I surrender everything is free from the slightest hint of stinginess, free from any sense of loss [phongs pa med par], free from any doubt [the tshom med par], and without any expectation for reward or for karmic fruition."

The root of saṃsāra ['khor ba'i rtsa ba / srid pa'i rtsa ba] is ego-clinging [bdag 'dzin], which is like a hungry and insatiable demon ['gong po / 'dre ltogs pa]. Such a demon is never satisfied, no matter how much he gets. He is in a constant state of need. Whatever he sees, hears, smells, tastes, touches or remembers, he immediately feels the need to possess it, without ever experiencing a thought or feeling of satisfaction [tshim med pa'i 'dre]. This is how the ego is.

This demon of ego-clinging can only be expelled through the supreme path of never forsaking any sentient being, while resting in the unity of emptiness and non-conceptual compassion. If one forsakes any sentient being, one is again sustaining ego-clinging, in the form of likes, dislikes and stupidity [gti mug].

At any time, when attachment [zhen 'dzin] and cherishing [gces 'dzin] arise, or when great fear arises, or when you may feel hurt or unhappy, just remember: "I have nothing left that I cherish, for I have already given away to others the three very bases of ego-clinging [bdag tu 'dzin pa'i gzhi gsum po]."

Once you have generated that attitude, you will feel as if a burden of suffering has been lifted from your mind. You will feel relaxed [blo khyol ler / klod po] and a feeling of peaceful happiness [bde cham me] will arise in you. One whose mind has gained the wisdom that realizes egolessness [bdag med rtogs pa'i shes rab] is open, happy and peaceful. Rest in this relaxed state of contentment.

A mind which grasps onto an 'identity' is restricted, depressed and nervous. Therefore, the realization that there is actually no identity to cherish serves to cast off the heavy load of suffering due to ego-clinging. When you are free from any kind of grasping, you have nothing to lose and no further basis for fear. This is identical with the Dzogchen view of 'cutting through' [khregs chod gyi lta ba]. If Śāntideva had not realized the view of cutting through, he would have never attained realization and become an accomplished siddha.

Whenever you identify yourself with your body, possessions, thoughts or feelings, whenever you hold onto a particular position, this is an instance of ego-clinging arising. At such a time, whatever pleasant or unpleasant situation you may face, whether people are hurting your feelings [mkhon du 'dzin pa] or insulting you, no matter what you are experiencing, recite these lines of stanza eleven and think: "I surrender my entire body, all my possessions, and all my virtue to you. Do whatever you think fit. There is nothing here which you can hurt or insult." When you are in great fear of dying, surrender the three bases, stay in the view of cutting through and say to yourself: "Fine, let's die right now!"

Imagine that you give your entire body, all your belongings, and all your merit to predators [gcan gzan] and demons ['dre srin]. Imagine that they devour your flesh,

drink your blood and take everything away from you. This is the visualization you should practice for 'Chö'. It does not matter whether or not you exclaim the syllable phaṭ, although Paltrül Rinpoche himself was said to have exclaimed it. The point here is not merely to shout phaṭ, but to actually relinquish all attachments. That is why this practice is known as mind-training as well as practicing generosity. Phaṭ is a syllable that cuts through concepts [rnam rtog bcod pa'i sgra].

A practitioner should recite stanza eleven a hundred thousand times and practice the visualization as described above. This will lead to a free and relieved state of mind. Apply these teachings in the context of your daily life. Whenever grasping onto the three bases arises, whenever you are afraid or feel threatened, simply recite these lines and rest in the view of 'cutting through' [khregs chod]. This is the true teaching of the Buddha.

Many rich people are incessantly tormented by the fear of losing their wealth. Beggars do not have this kind of fear. Whenever you own something, you also have the worry of losing it. The point of this stanza is to enable us to free our minds from clinging to our body, wealth and virtue. Once you have cut through all your clinging, you will be free from fear. This is why we present offerings [mchod pa] to the buddhas and practice generosity [sbyin pa] toward predators and spirits in the form of 'Chö'. The practitioner understands that everything he possesses and experiences should be used as an offering or donation for the benefit of others. There is a quote:

> Whatever you give to others is yours.
> Whatever you cling to as yours, belongs to others.
>
> gzhan la sbyin pa rang gi yin
> bdag tu 'dzin pa gzhan gyi red

Gendün Chöpel said, "It is true that faith [dad pa], compassion [snying rje] and renunciation [nges 'byung] are fixations. But in the beginning one must take care not to give up the positive fixations such as faith and renunciation, while hanging onto the malevolent fixations of the five mind poisons."

Seen from the point of the ultimate view [don dam pa'i lta ba], both virtue [dge ba] and negativity [sdig pa] are fixations ['dzin pa], and one needs to overcome them both. But a practitioner must first completely overcome the negative fixations on mind poisons, and only then attempt to overcome positive fixations on faith and renunciation. To become confused about this order of releasing fixations is utterly improper and would never work. A beginner on the path must rely upon fixation on positive attitudes. Therefore, first overcome the negative fixations in order to finally transcend the positive ones as well.

Milarepa described 'Chö practice' in the following way:

> Going to frightening places and hermitages is the 'outer cutting'.
> To sacrifice one's body (as food) to others is the 'inner cutting'.

> To cut ego-clinging at its root is the 'ultimate cutting'.
>
> gnyen sa ri khrod 'grin pa phyi yi gcod
> phung po gzan du bskyur ba nang gi gcod
> bdag 'dzin rtsad nas gcod pa don gyi gcod

If you go to frightening places [gnyen sa] such charnel grounds [dur khrod] and remote mountain hermitages [ri khrod], you will meet wild animals or even spirits and demons. During these encounters fear will inevitably arise in your mind. The strong fixation on your body causes tremendous fear of losing your life.

At this point you should practice the imaginary sacrifice of your body, your possessions and your merit to wild animals and demons. You invite them to partake in a feast offering of your body, wealth and merit, withholding nothing. In this way you confront and overcome your fixations and fears. If you are truly free from all fixation, there is no longer any need for you to practice'Chö'.

If a place is too peaceful and beautiful, it is not suitable for this practice. Going to a truly frightening place is called the 'outer Chö'. Offering your body, wealth and merit to wild beasts and spirits is called the 'inner Chö'. Cutting all ego-clinging at its very root is called the 'secret Chö'.

**Text sections 73:**

Śāntideva advises in the *Śikṣā-samuccaya*:

> Understand this key point among key points
> Of not falling (into saṃsāra), no matter how.
> You should surrender your body, your riches and
> The virtues you have created throughout the three times
> To all sentient beings.
> You should protect, purify and increase this (attitude of generosity).
>
> gang gis ltung bar mi 'gyur ba'i
> gnad kyi gnad rnams 'di rigs bya
> bdag gi lus dang longs spyod dang
> dge ba dus gsum bskyed pa rnams
> sems can kun la btang ba dang
> de bsrung dag dang spel ba'o

The key point among key points that prevents you from falling into saṃsāra *no matter how* [gang gis], meaning 'no matter through whatever reason' [rgyu mtshan gang gis], is a mind-training in generosity through the sequence of the following four steps: 1) giving or surrendering, 2) protecting, 3) purifying and 4) increasing.

1) Surrendering means giving away the three bases of ego-clinging for the benefit of all sentient beings. Thus, you generate a virtuous mind-set [dge ba'i sems]. 2) This generous and virtuous mind-set must then be protected, 3) purified from innate stains [rang skal gyi dri ma] and 4) increased further and further. These four key points are explained in great detail in the following text section.

**Text section 74:**

*Surrendering* [btang ba] refers to giving away the three bases. 'The base of the body' [lus kyi gzhi] includes body, speech and mind [lus ngag yid gsum]. 'The base of wealth' [longs spyod gyi gzhi] refers to your food [zas], clothing [gos], houses [gnas khang], horses [rta], cows [glang] and so forth, everything you own and treasure. 'The base of virtue' [dge ba'i gzhi] refers to all virtues that you have gathered in the past, that you are gathering in the present, and that you will gather in the future. Give everything that you consider to belong to you, all that you regard as your possessions, to others. Do this without any stinginess, attachment, expectation for reward or hope for a future positive ripening of karma.

You should *protect* [bsrung] this virtuous mind-set [dge ba'i sems], this mental training of generosity [btang sems], from whatever is not conducive to it [mi mthun pa'i phyogs], from all that opposes it. Do not allow it to deteriorate [nyams mi chud pa]. Protect this virtuous mind-set of generosity like a precious jewel.

'Whatever is not conducive' refers to any kind of fixation upon the three bases, any clinging to body, wealth, and virtues. Most importantly, this refers to all ego-clinging [bdag tu 'dzin pa]. Ego-clinging and a generous frame of mind [btang sems] are mutually exclusive; they cannot co-exist. The generous frame of mind must be protected from ego-clinging, because ego-clinging destroys generosity.

As a bodhisattva you are striving to protect your virtuous mind-set from everything that is not conducive to it [mi mthun pa'i phyogs], or that opposes your bodhicitta motivation [bsam pa byang chub sems] and your practice of the six transcendental perfections [sbyor ba phar phyin drug].

For instance, stinginess [ser sna] is not conducive to generosity [sbyin pa]; lax discipline [tshul khrims 'chal ba] is not conducive to discipline [tshul khrims]; anger [khong khro] is not conducive to patience [bzod pa]; laziness [le lo] is not conducive to diligence [brtson 'grus]; distraction [g.yengs ba] is not conducive to concentration [bsam gtan]; and perverted knowledge [shes rab 'chal ba] is not conducive for knowledge-wisdom [shes rab].

You should *purify* [dag] this mental training of generosity from all the stains of grasping at body, wealth and virtue. The stains of grasping onto your body [lus la 'dzin pa'i dri ma] are purified by mentally training in giving away the body. The stains of grasping onto your wealth [longs spyod la 'dzin pa'i dri ma] are purified by mentally training in giving your wealth away. The grasping onto your accumulations of virtue [dge tshogs la 'dzin pa'i dri ma] are purified by mentally training in dedicating your virtue toward the welfare of others.

Grasping onto your accumulation of virtue easily leads to pride [nga rgyal] and arrogance [rlom sems] if you think, "I have done well. I have accumulated great virtue. I am a great practitioner." This stains your practice of generosity, your virtuous mind-set. The stains of clinging to body, wealth and virtue are called 'inherent stains' [rang skal gyi dri ma]. Despite practicing to give up all fixations on your body, wealth and virtue, a thought like, "I have given everything away. How wonderful I am," will sneak in. This is an inherent stain. Even such subtle fixation must be overcome.

When your generosity is free from all stains including the inherent ones, then your mental training in giving has become a pure act of generosity. If your clinging to the three bases is too strong, you will be unable to overcome the subtle stains or inherent stains.

All ten bodhisattva levels and all ten transcendental perfections have inherent stains [rang skal gyi dri ma]. On the first bodhisattva level, the bodhisattva mainly perfects his or her practice of generosity. Of course he also practices all the other transcendental perfections, but his main focus is on perfecting generosity.

The inherent stain of the practice of generosity that the bodhisattva must purify to be truly able to practice genuine generosity is his clinging to body,wealth and virtue. The bodhisattva must reach a state of fearlessness, ready at all times to give his body, wealth and virtue to others. The wisdom of the first bodhisattva level [sa dang po'i ye shes] has the power to purify his mind of all inherent stains accompanying his practice of generosity.

However, the wisdom of the first level cannot purify the inherent stains of the second bodhisattva level. In this way, on every level the bodhisattva must purify his practice of inherent stains. Each level has its own wisdom [ye shes] that functions as the antidote [gnyen po] to purify that level's inherent stains of afflictions.

The bodhisattva's main focus on the second level is on the perfection of discipline; on the third level the perfection of patience; on the fourth the perfection of diligence; on the fifth the perfection of concentration; on the sixth the perfection of wisdom-knowledge; on the seventh the perfection of skillful means [thabs]; on the eighth the perfection of strength [stobs]; on the ninth the perfection of aspiration [smon lam]; and on the tenth the perfection of wisdom [ye shes]. Thus, traversing the ten bodhisattva levels, the bodhisattva trains in all ten transcendental perfections [phar phyin bcu].

The wisdom [ye shes] of the first bodhisattva level and the wisdom of the tenth bodhisattva level is the same. The bodhisattva perceives this same wisdom to an increasingly clearer degree as he gradually proceeds higher and higher through the ten levels. The obscurations that prevent a beginning bodhisattva from fully perceiving the wisdom are inherent to the bodhisattva's perception, not to the wisdom itself.

Through various skillful methods [thabs] bodhisattvas *increase* [spel] their mental training in generosity, their virtuous mind-set. They may do this by practicing 'Chö' or by simply applying the practice of giving away the three bases at all times. As they progress through the levels, bodhisattvas gradually develop all ten perfections. The

Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra is filled with many methods that allow bodhisattvas to release ego-clinging and to increase their generosity of mind more and more, as they progress from level to level. Through the methods taught in the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra bodhisattvas overcome all non-conducive aspects [mi mthun pa'i phyogs] and continually increase their virtue. If someone asked what these methods are, they mainly consist of bodhicitta itself and its application through the six or the ten transcendental perfections.

Giving away the three bases of body, wealth and virtues is an offering [mchod pa] as well as the practice of generosity [sbyin]. Regardless of whether you offer the three bases to the buddhas or dedicate them to all sentient beings, you give them up completely. This is also the essence of 'Chö-practice'.

Apply these four stages—surrendering, protecting, purifying and increasing—to the practice of giving away each of the three bases. Applying these four stages to the three bases you arrive at twelve aspects of the practice of relinquishing fixations.

The practice of such mind-training includes the essence of all six transcendental perfections [phar phyin drug gi ngo bo] because a truly generous mind-set [gtong sems] is free of fixations. Thus mind-training is the basis for all six perfections:

1) Surrendering the three bases, without maintaining any fixation to them whatsoever, is the essence of transcendental generosity [sbyin pa pha rol tu phyin pa]. In this way you are practicing the three types of generosity: giving away your wealth is 'material giving' [zang zing gi sbyin pa], giving away your virtue and merit is the 'gift of dharma' [chos kyi sbyin pa], and giving your wealth and body for the sake of others is 'granting protection from fear' [mi 'jigs pa skyabs kyi sbyin pa]. Thus, all aspects of generosity are included in the practice of surrendering the three bases.

2) Surrendering the three bases motivated by compassion, while abstaining from harming others [gzhan gnod spong ba], is the essence of discipline. Generosity makes you abstain from negative conduct, since you are practicing virtue and are benefiting others. Thus, this practice of surrendering the three bases covers the three types of discipline: the 'discipline of refraining from negative conduct' [nyes spyod sdom pa'i tshul khrims], the 'discipline of gathering virtuous dharmas' [dge ba chos sdud kyi tshul khrims], and the 'discipline of fulfilling the benefit of sentient beings' [sems can don byed kyi tshul khrims].

3) Surrendering the three bases, your mind will be free from turmoil [sems mi 'khrugs par], which is the essence of patience. Thus, you are practicing the three types of patience: the 'patience to bear being wronged by others' [gzhan gyi log sgrub bzod pa'i bzod pa], the 'patience to bear hardship for the sake of the dharma' [chos phyir dka' spyad bzod pa'i bzod pa], and the 'patience to be unafraid in regard to the profound meaning (of emptiness) [zab mo'i don la mi skrag pa'i bzod pa].

4) Surrendering the three bases, your mind rejoices in virtue [dge ba la spro ba], which is the essence of diligence. Thus, you are practicing the three types of diligence: the 'armor-like diligence' [go cha'i brtson 'grus], 'diligence in action' [sbyor ba'i brtson 'grus], and 'insatiable diligence' [chog par mi 'dzin pa'i brtson 'grus].

5) Surrendering the three bases, your mind is free from distraction, which is the essence of concentration. Thus, you are practicing the three types of concentration: the 'concentration practiced by child-like beings' [byis pa nyer spyod kyi bsam btan],[55] the 'clearly discerning concentration' [don rab 'byed pa'i bsam gtan], and the 'virtuous concentration of the tathagatas' [de bzhin gshegs dge'i bsam gtan].

6) Surrendering the three bases frees your mind from all fixations, which is the essence of wisdom knowledge [shes rab]. You will begin to understand profound emptiness. Thus, you are practicing the three kinds of wisdom knowledge: the 'wisdom-knowledge that comes from studying' [thos pa'i shes rab], the 'wisdom-knowledge that comes from contemplation' [bsam pa'i shes rab], and the 'wisdom knowledge that comes from meditation' [sgom pa'i shes rab].

In this way, all six transcendental perfections are included within the mental training of generosity. This is what is meant by the phrase 'establishing the essence of the six transcendental perfections' [phar phyin drug gi ngo bor bsgrub pa]. For as long as fixations are maintained, whatever activity or practice you undertake is not 'transcendental' [pha rol] but rather mundane [tshur rol]. For as long as you maintain all these fixations on your own body, wealth and virtue, none of the bodhisattva trainings in generosity, discipline, patience, diligence, meditation and wisdom can qualify as transcendental perfections. Hence, this practice of a generous mind frame renders the six perfections 'unique' [khyad par du byed pa], which in this context means 'transcendental' [pha rol tu].

If you have mentally surrendered everything you own, your body, wealth and virtue, to all sentient beings, you might wonder what is left for you to live on. You should make use of your food, clothing and other possessions just as a servant avails himself of the food, clothing and shelter provided by his employer. Have no sense of ownership of the things you are using to maintain your body, but use them solely for the sake of others. If, as a bodhisattva undertaking this practice, you use your possessions with a sense of ownership, for your own personal benefit, this is like stealing from all sentient beings. First you have given it away and now you are taking it back. That is called 'stealing what has already been given' [sbyin 'phrog] and is not at all proper.

However, if you use your possessions for the sake of others and without the idea that 'this all belongs to me', then everything is fine. Be like someone's chauffeur, who drives the car, cleans and maintains it for its owner, never entertaining the notion that he himself owns the car. The moment you think, "This belongs to me" you are stealing from all sentient beings and have violated your bodhisattva conduct.

These teachings are not something you only read and study. These instructions should be practiced every day of your life until you have overcome all fixations on the three bases. This is the practice for yogins who strive to attain enlightenment in one lifetime.

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[55] The term 'child-like beings' refers to 'ordinary people' [so so'i skye bo], those whose minds have not yet ripened [sems ma smin pa].

**Text sections 76-80 / stanza 12:**

This section provides two proofs ['thad pa] or reasons [rgyu mtshan] for the necessity of giving away the three bases of ego-clinging [bdag tu 'dzin pa'i gzhi gsum po]. This type of reasoning is called 'the principle of valid proof' ['thad pa sgrub pa'i rigs pa].

The *first* reason [rgyu mtshan dang po]: For as long as one maintains fixations on the three bases of ego-clinging, one will continue to circle in saṃsāra. Therefore, by giving away all three bases, one will reach liberation [thar pa] or nirvāṇa [myang 'das].

If someone were to ask, "If nirvāṇa is attained by giving away all the three bases, are you prepared to give away the three bases of ego-clinging?" you should answer as follows, "Well, my intention is to follow the Buddha and to renounce saṃsāra ['khor ba las rab tu byung ba'i blo]. Therefore, I do have the wish to accomplish the level of nirvāṇa. Consequently, I must give away the three bases." That is the first logical reasoning for giving away the three bases.

The phrase 'to get out of saṃsāra' or 'to renounce saṃsāra' ['khor ba las rab tu byung ba] means to take ordination as a monk or nun and become a renunciant. A follower of the Buddha has the 'objective' or 'intention' to separate him or herself from saṃsāra ['khor ba las kha bral ba'i bsam blo] and thus attain nirvāṇa. This is the objective of the path. To achieve this goal, giving away the three bases is absolutely necessary, as only through this method will nirvāṇa be achieved.

Since Khenpo Kunpal often uses phrases from the format of logical debate, a short introduction to logic might be of help. The format of logical debate usually follows four steps of reasoning [rigs pa]: a) stating the topic in discussion [chos can; skr. dharmin],[56] b) confronting this topic with a clear statement [gsal ba / thal ba],[57] c) giving a logical reason [rtags; skr. liṅga][58] and d) illustrating the reasoning with an example [dpe; skr. dṛṣṭānta].

The language used in debate is: a) the topic [chos can] is … , b) … it follows that … [yin par thal], c) because … [yin pa'i phyir], and d) for example [dper na]. With this format of reasoning one attempts to force the opponent into a position from which he has no escape ['phros sa rtsa nas med pa].

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[56] The 'topic in discussion' [chos can] connotes 'a subject endowed with special characteristics' [khyad chos yod pa can]. The topic identifies the 'basis of debate' [rtsod pa'i gzhi]. This basis for discussion can also be stated in the following way: "The basis for debate, the topic of discussion, is that I state … " [rtsod gzhi chos can /… par 'dod].

[57] The topic is then confronted with a 'clear statement' [gsal ba], something that is clearly stated [gsal po bslab pa]. The term 'it follows' [thal] means 'this must surely follow' ['di gtan gtan yong dgos gi red], 'it must be such and such' [yin dgos kyi red].

[58] The clear statement must be supported by a proof or a reason [rtags / rgyu mtshan]. Many kinds of reasons are used in debate: … ['gal ba'i rtags], … ['brel ba'i rtags], … [dngos 'gal gyi rtags], … [dngos 'gal ma yin pa'i rtags], … [ma nus pa'i rtags], … [rgyu 'gal gyi rtags] and so forth. (???)

For example: a) Topic: "The topic is the truth of the path" [lam gyi bden pa chos can]. b) Statement: "You must give it up" [khyod gtong dgos ste]. c) Reason: "Because the moment you attain the ultimate fruition, you must leave it behind" [mthar thug gi 'bras bu 'thob pa'i skabs la khyed rang 'dor dgos pa'i phyir]. d) Example: "Just like (leaving behind) a boat after you have crossed the river" [dper na chu las brgal zin pa'i gru gzings bzhin no].

At times one of the four steps of this debate format is missing; sometimes one of the steps might even be doubled or tripled. For example: (a) "The topic is the three bases of ego-clinging. (b) They must be given away (c) because you will be separated from them anyway. (c) If you do not give them away, you will eventually be separated from them without any purpose. (c) If you give the three bases away, it will be meaningful for you because you will attain the level of enlightenment" [bdag tu 'dzin pa'i gzhi gsum po de chos can / gtong dgos ste / kha bral 'gro ba'i phyir / ma gtong na yang don dag med pa'i kha bral ba'i phyir / gzhi gsum po gtong na don dag yod ste sangs rgyas kyi go 'phang 'thob pa'i phyir]. Note that the final step is missing in this particular example.

**Text section 78:**

Even after this reasoning has been established, you might wonder, "I understand that I have to give away my body and wealth, but why should I give away my virtue. Is nirvāṇa not attained through virtue? Now I am told to give away even my virtue. How then will I attain enlightenment? Will I not go astray if I give away my virtue?" The answer is: "Through virtue, nirvāṇa cannot be attained."

Now Khenpo Kunpal addresses worldly virtue, the virtue of the śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas, and finally the virtue of the bodhisattvas and buddhas.

*Worldly virtue*: Through defiling virtue [zag bcas kyi dge ba] and merit one will attain the three higher realms of gods and humans in saṃsāra. Through the accumulation of worldly virtue ['jig rten pa'i dge ba] one obtains the *(physical) basis for the path* [lam gyi rten],[59] which is the human body [lus po], but one does not accomplish the actual path itself [lam dngos ma]. Through defiling virtue alone, therefore, one cannot transcend saṃsāra. Even though one might have attained the precious human body, this merit and virtue will eventually be exhausted again.

The *accumulation of merit and virtue* [bsod nams dge ba'i tshogs] here refers to 'worldly virtue' ['jig rten pa'i dge ba], the ten virtuous actions [dge ba bcu]. You must give up your fixations on that kind of virtue, because worldly virtue will eventually be exhausted

[59] The basis for the path [lam gyi rten] is the physical basis for practicing the sublime dharma [dam pa'i chos sgrub pa'i rten], and refers to the precious human body [mi lus rin po che]. This basis arises due to the accumulation of worldly merit ['jig rten bsod nams kyi tshogs], through dualistic virtue [zag bcas kyi dge ba], which is the practice of the ten virtuous deeds [dge ba bcu]. This physical basis of human existence can become the condition for the wisdom of realizing egolessness [bdag med rtogs pa'i shes rab] to be born in the mind, a condition that is only brought about through non-dual virtue [zag med pa'i dge ba].

anyway. Therefore, give away the three bases of ego-clinging [bdag tu 'dzin pa'i gzhi gsum po] right now. That is the reasoning why practitioners must overcome their fixations on worldly virtue.

(a) "The topic is the accumulation of worldly merit and virtue. (b) You must give them away (c) because after you have attained the level of gods and humans, (this merit) will run out" ['jig rten pa'i bsod nams dge ba'i tshogs chos can / khyod gtong dgos ste / lha dang mi'i go 'phang thob tshar ba mjug la rdzogs 'gro ba'i phyir]

*Virtue of the śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas* [nyan rang gi dge ba]: Once one has gained a human rebirth through the merit accumulated in former lifetimes, one has achieved the perfect *basis* [rten], which provides the *condition* [rkyen] for *the truth of the path* [lam bden] to arise in one's mind. The truth of the path refers to the realization that one *lacks a personal identity* [gang zag gi bdag med] and to the realization that *phenomena lack any self-nature* [chos kyi bdag med].

By realizing the lack of a personal identity, one overcomes the obscuration of affliction [nyon sgrib] and attains the level of a śrāvaka arhat. By overcoming fixation on phenomena to a certain extent, one becomes a pratyekabuddha. These two levels of realization are the nirvāṇa of a Hīnayāna practitioner. For the arhats and pratyekabuddhas all fixations ['dzin] concerning the five aggregates [phung po; skandha] have collapsed. They are like a fire without firewood or a butter lamp that has burned down.

Because the śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas have no fixations concerning the five aggregates, they do not retain the slightest residual of any aggregate that is still subjected to the truth of suffering and the origin of suffering [sdug bsngal dang kun 'byung gyi bden pa'i phung po]. Therefore, their realization is called *nirvāṇa without remainder* [lhag med myang 'das]. They are like someone who has completely overcome a disease, without even the slightest remainder of the disease left. At that time the compounded virtue ['dus byas kyi dge ba] that one has accumulated while traversing the truth of the path has ceased to exist [lam bden gyi dge ba].

In regard to the virtue of the śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas, a practitioner must give up all fixations in regard to that kind of virtue, because once one has attained nirvāṇa without remainder, this is like a fire that has run out of firewood. Therefore, give up any fixation on the three bases of ego-clinging [bdag tu 'dzin pa'i gzhi gsum po] right now. That is the reasoning in regard to the virtue of the arhats and pratyekabuddhas. They have thrown off the burden of suffering and have finished what needed to be done. They will leave the truth of the path behind like a boat.

The arhats and pratyekabuddhas enter into cessation ['gog pa], a state of absorption [snyoms 'jug], where they remain for many aeons until being awakened from this state by light rays emitted from the Buddha. They then must enter the bodhisattva path from the very beginning.

(a) "The topic is the virtue of the śrāvaka arhats. (b) You must give it away (c) because when the skandhas have transcended suffering within the unexcelled expanse, they come to an end (d) just like a lamp being extinguished" [nyan thos dgra bcom pa'i dge ba

chos can / khyod gtong dgos ste / phung po bla na med pa'i dbyings su mya ngan las 'das pa'i tshe na mar me shi ba ltar rgyun chad par 'gyur ba'i phyir].

*The virtue of the Mahāyāna practitioners* [theg chen gyi dge ba]: Only if one is able to overcome both the obscuration of afflictions [nyon sgrib] and the obscuration of cognition [shes sgrib], together with all habitiual patterns, will one reach the nirvāṇa of the Mahāyāna path. Liberation [thar pa] and perfect enlightement [rdzogs byang] both connote non-fixation ['dzin med]. So, the more a practitioner can ovecome fixations, the further he will progress along the path. Someone who is able to give up all fixation on a personal identity [gang zag gi bdag 'dzin] reaches the state of an arhat. Someone who can overcome fixation on a personal identity as well as fifty percent of their fixation on phenomena [chos kyi bdag 'dzin] will reach the state of a pratyekabuddha. Someone who is able to overcome both fixation on a personal identity and fixation on phenomena attains the level of a buddha.

*Liberation* [thar pa] is the end of *delusion* [nor ba].[60] Mahāyāna nirvāṇa is merely the end of the two obscurations. Besides that, there is nothing left to accomplish. Even *the truth of the path* [lam bden] must be left behind, just as you leave a boat behind once you have crossed the river. Even the thought, "I will let go of the three bases of ego-clinging" must be discarded.

As long as virtue is fettered by ego-clinging [bdag 'dzin gyis chings pa], as long as one is attached to one's virtue, buddhahood cannot be reached. Dualistic virtue [zag bcas kyi dge ba] will ripen and then fade away again. One virtuous cause will produce one virtuous result. Dualistic virtue is very limited. That is why dedicating the merit is so important. To give away the three bases of ego-clinging includes giving away the virtue accumulated throughout the three times. This aspect is identical with dedication of virtue [dge ba bsngo ba].

The *truth of the path* [lam bden], the realization of both types of egolessness, is said to be like a boat one uses to cross a stream. Once you have arrived at the other side of the river, you leave the boat behind rather than carrying it with you. Once a practitioner has reached enlightenment, all dharmas that belong to the truth of the path have become useless and are left behind. The *truth of the path* [lam bden] is impermanent. It is also called 'the truth of the path that involves concepts' [dmigs bcas lam gyi bden pa]. All dharmas belonging to the truth of the path [lam bden gyi chos thams cad] are mingled with dualistic mind [sems dang 'dres pa].

Perfect enlightenment is only reached if one is utterly freed from all fixations. You must be free from all fixations on 'compounded virtue' ['dus byas kyi dge ba] and all 'virtue of the path' [lam bden gyi dge ba]. Ultimately, fixation on virtue must be overcome [dge ba la 'dzin pa mthar thug spong dgos red]. For that reason you must give away the three bases of ego-clinging [bdag tu 'dzin pa'i gzhi gsum po] right now.

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[60] sems 'khrul pa nas thar pas na thar pa

You must dedicate both defiling virtue [zag bcas kyi dge ba] and non-defiling virtue [zag med gyi dge ba], both the virtue of Hīnayāna [theg dman gyi dge ba] and the virtue of Mahāyāna [theg chen gyi dge ba], in order to free yourself from fixation upon virtue.

*Virtue of Mahāyāna practitioners* [theg chen gyi dge ba]: One might again wonder, "I understand that I have to give up fixation on worldly virtue and the virtue of the śrāvakas and pratyekabuddha. But why should I give up the virtues of the Mahāyāna path?" If someone has truly *overcome the two obscurations, including all habitual patterns* [sgrib gnyis bag chags dang bcas pa], then one has attained the *nirvāṇa of Mahāyāna* [theg chen gyi myang 'das], which is *the fruition of being free* [bral ba'i 'bras bu] from the two obscurations. The two obscurations are nothing other than fixations ['dzin pa]. Conceptual obscurations [shes bya'i sgrib pa] in particular also include fixating on merit [bsod nams la 'dzin pa].

Therefore, if you want to reach the nirvāṇa of Mahāyāna, you need to give up the three basis of ego-clinging since nirvāṇa of Mahāyāna is nothing other than the fruition of being free from the two obscurations, which are two types of fixations ['dzin pa gnyis].

(a) "The topic is the virtue of Mahāyāna. (b) You must let go of (all) fixation to it (c) because the level of buddhahood is free from (any) fixation" [theg pa chen po'i dge ba chos can / khyod de la 'dzin pa phar gtong dgos ste / sangs rgyas kyi go 'phang 'dzin pa dang bral ba yin pa'i phyir].

**Text section 80:**

Perfect enlightenment cannot be attained solely through the accumulation of conceptual merit [dmigs bcas bsod nams kyi tshogs]. The accumulation of non-conceptual wisdom [dmigs med ye shes kyi tshogs] is indispensable. Conceptual worldly virtue not only leads to rebirth in the three higher realms of saṃsāra, but can also cause the conditions for the realization of egolessness to arise in one's mind. However, it is of no benefit to the actual realization of egolessness, the attainment of liberation [thar pa], of either Hīnayāna or Mahāyāna practitioners. Moreover, conceptual worldly virtue plays no role in the actual attainment of perfect enlightenment.

Worldly virtue that is fettered by ego-clinging [bdag 'dzin gyis bcing ba'i 'jig rten pa'i dge ba] is useless for the attainment of liberation [thar pa] since it is not transcendental [pha rol tu phyin pa ma red]. For as long as a practitioner retains ego-clinging, he will not be able to practice non-defiling virtue [zag med gyi dge ba]. Worldly virtue and merit belong to the path of accumulation [tshogs lam] and the path of application [sbyor lam].

From the first bhumi onward, the practitioner has overcome ego-clinging. In general, one can say that worldly virtue and merit, which are always fettered by ego-clinging, do not have the power to take you all the way along the path of noble beings ['phags pa'i lam], the path of seeing [mthong lam].

All practitioners should acknowledge that conceptual merit is not part of the natural state, and must be let go of at the moment of enlightenment. Therefore, they should

dedicate all conceptual merit immediately upon accumulating it, and not hold on to it with attachment and fixation. Conceptual virtue and merit is impermanent and will eventually be exhausted. Everything that is compounded ['dus byas] will eventually fall apart. Therefore, give away your conceptual virtue and merit right now. Such compounded merit will not lead to ultimate enlightenment. The state of buddhahood is beyond 'compounded' ['dus byas] and 'uncompounded' ['dus ma byas]. On the ultimate level there is nothing that can be held on to [tshur len rgyu med pa] and nothing that can be cast away [phar gtong rgyu med pa]. On that level, the practitioner cannot maintain any fixation at all.

It is very important to understand this teaching in the right way. For the attainment of liberation [thar pa] or perfect enlightenment [rdzogs byang] all fixations, even those on Buddhist virtue and merit, must be overcome.

A practitioner should progress gradually through his or her training and learn step by step how to overcome fixation. At first, he or she must learn how to overcome the gross fixations. Then he will learn how to give up the more subtle fixations, until finally, he understands how to give up even the most subtle. Gross fixations are fixations on negativity [sdig pa la 'dzin pa] such as fixations on aggression, passion, pride, jealousy and stinginess.

First, beginning practitioners must strive to reduce these negative fixations as much as they can. Next, they should strive to overcome their fixations on their possessions. Then, they should carefully examine whether they are able to give up fixations on their bodies. Finally, they should learn how to overcome subtle fixations such as the positive or religious fixations on the buddha [sangs rgyas la 'dzin pa], on the dharma [chos la 'dzin pa], on faith [dad pa la 'dzin pa], on virtue [dge ba la 'dzin pa] and so forth. These positive fixations are part of the truth of the path [lam gyi bden pa], which is the dharma [chos]. Eventually, a practitioner must let go even of the fixation on the thought, "all phenomena are empty" [chos thams cad stong pa nyid yin no]. These are all subtle forms of cognitive obscurations [shes sgrib].

The question raised here is, "Don't we need these positive fixations in order to reach liberation or complete enlightenment?" The answer is "No, you do not need them, you need to overcome all fixations, even those on virtue and merit." This is the ultimate reason why it is good to practice reducing fixations on all three bases of ego-clinging right now.

However, if the sequence of these teachings on overcoming fixations is reversed, this will lead the practitioner completely astray. If a beginner thinks he can, or needs to, let go of fixation on the qualities of the Buddha, faith, virtue and positive thinking, he will either become a demon or a nihilist. Those practitioners who first give up fixation on virtue will end up entangled in mind-poisons like Rudra, who had deprived himself of any remedy [gynen po med pa] for his mind-poisons.[61] At the beginning of the path,

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[61] Add the story of Matram Rudra (???)

virtue is absolutely required to reduce and begin to overcome gross fixations. If you let go of virtue too early, you will have lost your antidote against negativity [sdig pa].

The conduct of a practitioner should always be in accord with the dharma. Do not act like a crazy yogin. As a practitioner, you have a responsibility to all sentient beings. You should act as an example for others. People can only judge you based on your behavior. They have no way of knowing how high or profound your view and meditation may be. If the disciples of a great master appear to act carelessly or negatively, others will be in doubt and might even lose faith in the disciple's master. A practitioner should always behave in a way that does not shock others or cause them to lose their devotion. As it is said:

> Be a (pure) field so that sponsors gather merit.
> Be an ornamentation to the eye so that devotees are inspired.
>
> 'byor ldan bsod nams bsags pa'i zhing sa
> dad ldan dvangs ba dran pa'i mig rgyan

The supreme conduct of a yogin is that of a 'three-fold vajra holder' [gsum ldan rdo rje 'dzin pa]. Externally, a perfect monk or nun, with all precepts intact. Internally, never departing from the three-fold trainings of a bodhisattva. Secretly, a perfect practitioner of Dzogchen or Mahamudra. Such a yogin maintains the vinaya-precepts, the bodhisattva trainings and the tantric samayas without any conflict. As Guru Rinpoche said:

> Although my view is higher than the sky,
> The law of karma, of cause and fruition, is more refined than barley flour.
>
> nga lta ba nam mkha' bas kyang mtho
> las rgyu 'bras bag phye bas kyang zhib

Since the law of karma is more refined than barley flour, the conduct of every practitioner, even a very advanced one, should always be in accord with the dharma. One should never think that one is beyond the law of karma.

Of course the thought, "I will try to attain buddhahood," is a mere thought and a fixation. Unless you had such a positve fixation, you would never embark on practice in the first place and therefore would never progress toward enlightenment. Once you have attained enlightenment this thought becomes entirely useless. At the moment, however, we are merely at the beginning of the path. The Buddhist path must be practiced step by step.

**Text section 81:**

*The second reasoning* [rgyu mtshan gnyis pa]: It has been said that one must give up the three bases of ego-clinging if one wants to reach liberation. Now, a person might think, "It might be necessary to give away the three bases of ego-clinging [bdag tu 'dzin pa'i

gzhi gsum po] if one wants to reach nirvāṇa, but I do not aspire to reach nirvāṇa at all because I am an ordinary human being. As a matter of fact, I am not even a Buddhist. Why should I then give up the three bases?" To answer that line of thought, one should explain that all worldly or dualistic virtue and merit will anyway inevitably be exhausted, or will be consumed by aggression and negativity. Moreover, at the time of death everyone leaves behind their body and wealth.

Various conditions lead to the exhaustion of dualistic virtue [zag bcas dge rtsa zad pa'i rkyen]: anger [zhe sdang / khong khro], jealousy [phrag dog], regret ['gyod pa], perverted dedication [log par bsngo ba], spiritual pretentiousness [ngoms chos], and not dedicating virtue at all [ma bsngos pa]. One single moment of anger can instantaneously destroy the virtue and merit accumulated over many aeons. Merit that has been dedicated, however, can never be consumed by anger.

Similarly, the feeling of regret about virtue one has accumulated destroys merit. You might have given a great donation to a monastery, but later regret your action and think that you have wasted your money. That feeling of regret will immediately destroy the merit accumulated by the donation. Some beings accumulate great virtue and make perverted aspirations [smon lam log pa] to harm others. For instance, you might have erected a stūpa and upon its completion made the perverted aspiration, "May I become so powerful that I will be able to destroy all my enemies." Such perverted aspirations lead to the destruction of merit just aquired.

In case you have not destroyed your merit in the abovementioned ways, you might actually experience the ripening of your virtue. Nevertheless, once virtue has ripened, it exhausts itself. For all these reasons, dedicating your merit to the welfare of others, as soon as you accumulate it, is of utmost importance.

Body, wealth and virtue are all compounded and therefore subject to separation [bral ba'i chos can]. 'Compounded' means coming into existence through causes [rgyu] and conditions [rkyen]. Nothing that is compounded will stay with you forever; every compounded phenomenon ['dus byas kyi chos] will eventually separate from you. You will lose your body, your wealth and your virtue.

Therefore, right now, mentally practice giving away your body, wealth and virtue for the sake of all sentient beings. Through that practice you will gain great virtue and merit. By dedicating this virtue and merit to all sentient beings, even this 'compounded virtue' will become similar to 'uncompounded virtue' ['dus ma byas pa'i dge ba nang bzhin]. Compounded virtue that has been dedicated to the attainment of enlightenment of all sentient beings will not cease until all sentient beings have reached enlightenment, although it is a 'compounded root of virtue' ['dus byas kyi dge rtsa].

The traditional example for compounded merit never being exhausted is that of adding drops of water to the ocean. As long as the ocean does not dry up, these drops of water will remain. This special feature of dedication [bsngo ba'i khyad chos] ensures that 'compounded virtue' remains equally everlasting as uncompounded virtue simply because it has been given away for the sake of all sentient beings.

**Text section 82:**

At the time of death you will lose your body and wealth in any case. Your virtue will also eventually be exhausted. You will lose everything at once.[62] In this way you lose all three bases *with no purpose* or meaning [don 'bras med pa]. Therefore, think, "While I am still in control of myself [rang bdang yod pa'i dus su], I should give away all three bases of ego-clinging right now to all sentient beings so that the root of this virtue will never be lost" [chud zos su ma song ba].

Generally, all compounded things are subject to separation [spyi btang 'dus byas kyi chos thams cad bral ba'i chos can yin]. You cannot hold on to your body, wealth and virtue. Eventually, you have to let go of them. Why not instead offer them to others and gain tremendous virtue in doing so? Why wait for the inevitable, your death, to catch up with you?

Although you might argue that you are not a Buddhist and therefore need not give your body, wealth and virtue to others, nonetheless you still should since you will lose them anyway. It is much better to learn how to practice the dharma while you have the chance to do so. In that way you will fare well in this life as well as the ones to come, and eventually you will attain the supreme goal [don bras mchog], the state of buddhahood.

**Text section 83 / stanza 13:**

We must free ourselves from the snare [rgya] of ego-clinging. And this snare is our body, speech and mind [lus ngag yid gsum]. Therefore, Śāntideva tells us to give our body, wealth and virtue to all sentient beings. A beginner finds it easier to mentally offer body, wealth and virtue to the buddhas than to dedicate it to all sentient beings. Actually, however, offering one's body, wealth and virtue to all sentient beings carries much greater merit than offering them to the buddhas. The buddhas do not need our offerings at all. When we present offerings to the buddhas, the buddhas are functioning as an object for our mental training.

Generate the thought and certainty, "I have given this body of mine, from the bottom of my heart, to all infinite sentient beings." The willingness to give [gtong sems] is the characteristic of generosity [sbyin pa'i mtshan nyid]. Think, "I have given them my body. They can do with it as they please. They can kill me, blame me, beat me; they can do whatever they wish with my body."

In this way, a practitioner generates a carefree attitude, that does not maintain any fixation to his body [lus po la 'dzin pa med]. He no longer considers his body to be his own. He has already given it away [byin zin pa yin].

**Text section 84 / stanza 14:**

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[62] At once or at the same time [chab gcig= 'dra bar = mnyam du].

"May they toy [rtse 'jo] with my body, may they provoke me or make a mockery of me [co 'dri bar byed], just to see how I respond [ci zer lta bas co 'dri bar byed pa]. May many people ridicule me [ga zha]; it does not matter since I have already given this body of mine to others. Therefore, why should I defend myself against unjust accusations ['gal spong] or try to establish harmony [mthun sgrub]? What is the use of holding my body dear?"

A practitioner who has such a carefree attitude does not react to any of the various kinds [mi 'dra ba sna tshogs] of insults or put downs ['phya smod]. The term 'kata' [ka ta] connotes 'to hold dear' [gces par 'dzin pa], 'to treasure' [gces spres] or 'to protect' [srung skyob byed pa]. "Why should I protect it, why should I hold it dear?" [kha tas ci zhig bya]. Thinking about this, we can find no reason to hold this body dear.

Such a practitioner no longer retains any concept of a personal identity [rang dbang gi 'du shes]. He no longer identifies himself with his own body. He has utterly disowned his body, and no longer even thinks, "This is my body." As long as you feel hurt if someone disparages your physical appearance, or feel elated if someone praises your looks, you are still identifying yourself with your body. You are still thinking and feeling, "I am this body."

**Text section 85 / stanza 15:**

"I will allow others to do to me whatever they want, as long as in this way they are not bringing temporary or long-lasting harm upon themselves." In general, a bodhisattva tolerates everything that others do to him or her, provided that they do not thereby harm themselves. A bodhisattva always strives to set beings on the path of virtuous and befitting actions [rigs pa'i las / bya ba byed 'os pa]. Like good parents they give everything to their children, but will never give them anything that will harm them. The bodhisattva regards all sentient beings with the same love and kindness as if they were his personal children.

In stanza fifteen Śāntideva is making the general aspiration that the karmic fruition of whatever sentient beings have done or will do to him, as a bodhisattva, whether these are positive or negative deeds, will always bear positive fruit. Śāntideva prays that whatever beings do to him will never be meaningless [don med], and that the positive results will never be lost [las byas pa chud mi za ba]. He makes the aspiration, "I have given my body to all sentient beings. Whatever they do with my body, may it never be meaningless or unprofitable for anyone. May I be the cause for all sentient beings to obtain whatever they wish for."

**Text section 86 / stanza 16:**

In stanza sixteen Śāntideva makes the particular aspiration, "May I be—for all who encounter me, those who encounter me with anger and wish me harm, as well as those who encounter me with devotion and wish to benefit me—the source that fulfils their spiritual and material wishes."

**Text sections 87-88 / stanza 17:**

Śāntideva continues with this aspiration in stanza seventeen, saying, "May those—who slander me [kha zer], directly say bad things to my face [kha thog nas skad cha sdug cha bshad] or openly harm my body and possessions, as well as those who villify me behind my back [lkog nas 'phya ba], those who mock me [phyar ka] with such denigration [skur ba 'debs pa] as saying I have no qualities though I do have some—may they all have the fortune to attain great enlightenment" [byang chub chen po]. *Mockery* [phyar ka] connotes 'belittling someone' [smad ra / sma 'bebs/ 'phya smod] and refers to casual insults, said without a great deal of thought.

Thus, Śāntideva is showing that beings' actions [sbyor ba] in regard to a bodhisattva, even if negative, are never in vain [chus mi za bar] and are never meaningless [don med pa med pa]. In these stanzas Śāntideva makes the aspirations that no matter what sentient beings might do, think or say to him or about him, their actions will all become a cause for their happiness. He prays that any way of coming into contact with him will lead beings away from negativity [sdig pa] and suffering [sdug bsngal] and toward virtue [dge ba] and happiness [bde ba].

To make aspirations such as these is of great importance and benefit. The buddhas are utterly impartial in their wisdom [ye shes] and compassion [snying rje]. With their wisdom and compassion they regard all beings without any distinction [khyad pa med pa]. There is, however, a distinction in the scope of the aspirations they made before attaining complete enlightenment [smon la khyad pa]. The greater were their aspirations while they were still bodhisattvas, the more beings will they be able to lead to buddhahood. The activities of different buddhas appear to manifest in different ways depending upon the vastness of their aspirations as bodhisattvas.

Thus, we should make vast aspirations such as these, from the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra, right now, while we are still on the bodhisattva path. In the future then, when we have become buddhas, our activity will manifest according to our aspirations. In the Mañjuśrī-kṣetra-vyūha[63] it is said:

> All phenomena arise according to conditions
> And are totally dependent upon one's intentions.
> Whatever aspirations one makes
> Will result in the corresponding fruition.
>
> chos rnams thams cad rkyen bzhin te
> 'dun pa'i rtse la rab tu gnas
> gang gis smon lam ci btab pa
> de 'dra'i 'bras bu thob par 'gyur

[63] 'jam dpal zhing gi yon tan (bkod pa) bstan pa, Peking vol. 760, book 15.

These aspirations from the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra first have the benefit that the precious bodhicitta will be born in one's mind. Later on, these aspirations become the actual training [bslab bya] of a bodhisattva. That is why they are so essential. Even the eighteen rules one should observe to prevent the eighteen root downfalls of a bodhisattva [rtsa ltung bco brgyad] can be condensed into these aspirations. These downfalls will be explained in great detail in chapter four.

**Text section 89 / stanza 18:**

The fruition of this mind-training must be dedicated for the benefit of others. Śāntideva now aspires to be a refuge for pitiful sentient beings, who are meek and powerless. *Meek* [khas zhan pa] means timid [nyams chung ba] and *powerless* [dbang chung ba] means 'having little power' [dbang cha chung chung yod pa].

We should pray, "May I become a protector for those without protection." And furthermore, "May I be a guide for all travelers who are on the road." *Travelers* [lam du zhugs pa] refers to those who have embarked on a wrong path [lam log pa la zhugs mkhan]. The chief *guide* [ded dpon gtso bo] is a bodhisattva who leads all those misguided beings onto the right path, the path of virtue.

**Text section 90 / stanza 19:**

Now Śāntideva prays: "May I become an island for those who seek an island," referring to people who are lost and disoriented in the middle of the ocean. He continues, "May I be a lamp for those who desire a lamp," meaning those lost in the darkness of the night or those without a lamp to work or read by. *Lamp* literally means 'butter-lamp' [mar me], 'a fire based on butter' [mar la brten nas me], but in this context refers to 'lamp' [sgron me] or 'light' ['od].

All these aspirations will culminate in a bodhisattva's capacity to emanate what is known as 'manifold nirmāṇakāya'. 'Manifold nirmāṇakāya' [sna tshogs sprul sku] refers to all representations of the Buddha's body, speech and mind [sku gsung thugs rten] and also to relics of the Buddha. It can also mean anything that benefits sentient beings, such as lotus flowers [me tog], jewels [rin chen], medicine [sman], food [zas], drink [skom], clothing [gos], vehicles [shing rta], lamps [mar me], beds [mal], bridges [zam pa], villages [grong khyer], servants [bran bkol], and so forth. In this manner a bodhisattva is able to supply sentient beings with whatever they want and need.

**Text section 91 / stanza 20**

Universal monarchs of former aeons had *wish-fulfilling jewels* [yid bzhin nor bu] among their possessions. Such wish-fulfilling jewels granted all the monarchs' wishes due to their great merit. The personal merit [bsod nams] of a universal monarch was the cause [rgyu] and the wish-fulfilling jewel was the condition [rkyen] for all their wishes to be fulfilled. If we now possessed this very same jewel, it would most probably look like an ordinary stone since our merit is so much less than the merit of the universal

monarchs of former aeons. Wish-fulfilling jewels only arise through aspirations that generate extraordinary merit. Such a jewel is the manifestation of the monarch's merit [bsod nams kyi rang gzugs] and of his aspirations [smon lam gyi rang gzugs].

It is said that wish-fulfilling jewels were dark blue in color [mthing nag / sngon po], like blue diamonds. The universal monarchs kept these jewels on their shrines and treated them with utmost respect. When the need arose, they placed their wish-fulfilling jewel on top of a victory-banner [rgyal mtshan rtse mo] or on top of a high throne and supplicated it and presented offerings. If they prayed for rain, rain would fall. If they prayed for their people to be cured of infectious diseases, they would be cured. If an army invaded the kingdom, the monarchs would pray to the wish-fulfilling jewel and the invasion would end. The wish-fulfilling jewel was the object or the support for the universal monarchs' aspirations [smon lam gyi rten]. Relics of the Buddha and great masters of the past are also sometimes 'wish-fulfilling jewels'. Precious bodhicitta is compared to such a wish-fulfilling jewel in stanza twenty.

The *noble vase of great treasures* [gter chen po'i bum pa bzang po] was similar to the wish-fulfilling jewel in that the world monarchs could extract from these vases whatever they wished for. Such magical vases arise only through extraordinary generosity. Bodhicitta is the true magical or noble treasure vase.

These magical possessions actually belonged to gods and celestial beings. The world monarchs of former aeons had human bodies but the merit and possessions of the gods. Here Śāntideva is aspiring to become a wish-fulfilling jewel or a treasure vase to ease the suffering of all beings and to fulfil all their wishes.

A *vidyā-mantra* [rig sngags] is 'a mantra which accomplishes a deity's activity and wisdom aspect, the vajra mind' [lha'i phrin las dang thugs rdo rje shes rab kyi cha gtso bor sgrub pa'i sngags]. Accomplished yogins, who have practiced vidyā-mantras for a long time, have the power to prolong peoples' lifespans and to improve their health by blowing on mantra substances such as 'consecrated water' [bum chu] and sprinkling it on people. In former times mantras were considered to be as powerful as medicine. People believed that mantras cured sickness, removed obstacles and prolonged their lives. Actually that is all true. But mantras only work well for one who has trust and faith in them. Śāntideva makes the aspiration to become such an accomplished vidyā-mantra to benefit beings in various ways. The most profound and accomplished vidyā-mantra is bodhicitta itself.

The *six classes of the gods of the desire realm* ['dod lha rigs drug][64] refers to the following celestial abodes: 1) Caturmahārāja-kāyikā [rgyal chen rigs bzhi], 2) Trāyastriṃśa [sum cu rta gsum], 3) Yāma ['thab bral], 4) Tuṣita [dga' ldan], 5) Nirmāṇarati ['phrul dga'], 6) Paranirmita-vaśvarttina [gzhan 'phrul dbang byed]. The gods in these heavens have very long lifespans, very radiant complexions, are very strong and so forth. Śāntideva prays to become a vidyā-mantra so powerful that whoever comes in contact with it will be

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[64] See also *Gateway to Knowledge Vol. II*, pages 93

equal in fortune to these gods of the desire realm and will be endowed with all their qualities.

Furthermore, Śāntideva prays to become a powerful and *great medicine* [sman chen po], one that cures all diseases, a single panacea [sman dkar po gcig thub] that can alleviate all ills. The true single panacea for all ills is bodhicitta.

The *wish-fulfilling tree* [dpag bsam shing] covers the land of the nāgas, asuras and gods. Its roots are said to reach down to the ocean abode of the nāgas, below Mt. Sumeru, its leaves to spread in the realm of the asuras, and its fruits to ripen only in the realm of the gods. The nāgas have riches beyond imagination. Nevertheless, they only have the merit to accumulate and protect wealth but lack the merit to enjoy wealth, having never developed a generous mind-set. The asuras are mainly consumed by jealousy [phrag dog] and anger, and therefore lack the merit to enjoy the fruits of the wishful-filling tree. The gods have peaceful and virtuous minds and thus have sufficient merit to enjoy the fruits of the wish-fulfilling tree. Śāntideva makes the aspiration to become a wish-fulfilling tree and thus be able to benefit and help all sentient beings. Bodhicitta is that very wish-fulfilling tree.

The term *red-dappled cow that yields all wishes* ['dod pa 'jo ba'i ba dmar zal] is a red-colored cow with white spots [dmar bkra]. The idea of this 'cow of plenty' or 'cow of abundance' is that it can be milked forever and will grant whatever one wishes. This cow of plenty is said to reside on the Western continent of Godānīya [ba lang spyod].

**Text section 92 / stanza 21**

The five great elements of earth [sa], water [chu], fire [me], wind [rlung], and space [nam mkha'] are the bases for the 'twelve external and internal factors' [phyi nang gi 'byung 'gyur bcu gnyis]. These are the six external sense fields [phyi'i skye mched drug] and the six inner sense organs [nang gi skye mched drug]. The six external sense fields are form [gzugs], sound [sgra], smell [dri], taste [ro], touch [reg bya], and thoughts [chos bcas dmigs pa'i cha]. The six internal sense organs [nang gi skye mched drug] are eye [mig], ear [rna], nose [sna], tongue [lce], body (texture) [lus], and intellect [yid bcas].

According to another explanation there are 'ten external and internal factors' [phyi nang gi 'byung 'gyur bcu], five external factors and five internal factors. The 'five external factors' [phyi'i 'byung 'gyur lnga] refer to the five sense objects, which are form [gzugs], sound [sgra], smell [dri], taste [ro], and touch [reg bya]. The 'five internal factors' [nang gi 'byung 'gyur lnga] refer to the five sense organs [dbang po lnga], which are eyes [mig], ears [rna], nose [sna], tongue [lce] and body (texture) [lus].

Earth can hold or support everything. Therefore, the phrase *earth supports* [sas rten]. The phrase *water gathers* [chus sdud pa] means, for instance, that flowers require water to stay together and alive. Once a flower has dried up for lack of water, it is destroyed. The phrase *fire ripens* or *fire matures* [mes smin pa] refers to the fact that flowers, for instance, grow through the warmth of the sun. The phrase 'wind prevents decay' [rlung gis mi rul bar byed pa] means that, providing fresh air, wind keeps the flower from decaying. The phrase 'space encompasses everything' [nam mkha' yis thams cad

khyab cing go 'byed pa] means that space provides the openness for all four great elements to unfold.

Thus, Śāntideva prays to become the five great elements since they provide the necessary life support for all sentient beings. He prays to perform the individual functions [byed las] of each of the five great elements, which are to support, to gather, to mature, to move (and thereby prevent decay) and to provide openness. Śāntideva makes the aspiration to benefit all sentient beings by manifesting as the five great elements. Thus, he has made an aspiration of vast extent [khyab pa rgya che ba'i smon lam].

**Text section 93 / stanza 22:**

Śāntideva next makes the aspiration to become the source of life for all sentient beings and to remain for as long as it takes for all sentient beings to attain nirvāṇa, which means forever. Thus, he makes an aspiration to remain forever.

**Text section 94:**

Mind-training is a preparatory practice [sngon du sbyor ba] for the development of bodhicitta and should also be practiced after bodhicitta has been developed. 'Training afterwards' [rjes su bslab bya] means that mind-training is a practice that supports the bodhisattva's trainings [bslab bya] and precepts [sdom pa] after bodhicitta has been developed.

A practitioner should make aspirations and expand his frame of mind [blo rgya bskyed nas] as much as possible. The scope of one's bodhicitta development and one's aspirations while on the path to enlightenment will determine the scope of one's activities after having gained enlightenment. Although there is no difference in the wisdom realized by all the buddhas, Khenpo Kunpal states that the buddhas do differ in their previous aspirations and therefore the scope of their activities appears to be different. The extent to which one develops bodhicitta and makes aspirations as a bodhisattva determines the power and scope of one's activities as a buddha.

**Text section 95:**

After one has practiced the mind-training [blo sbyang] of giving away the three bases [gzhi gsum po], one is ready to make the commitments [dam bca' ba], to receive the bodhisattva precepts. Without having undergone the previously described mind-training, a practitioner will not be able to keep the bodhisattva precepts. Only when one is truly able to give away the three bases of ego-clinging [bdag tu 'dzin pa'i gzhi gsum po] can bodhicitta be born.

The main point of mind-training, carrying the following meaning, has been stated in text section 65. Without cutting the clinging to one's self-centered wishes, the motivation to benefit others cannot be born [rang 'dod gyi 'khri ba ma bcad na gzhan phan gyi bsam pa mi skyi ba]. In other words, mind-training has the purpose of cutting

through clinging to self-centered wishes [rang 'dod gyi 'khri ba bcad pa'i phyir du blo sbyong dgos red].

Three levels of courage can be distinguished in regard to developing bodhicitta; the king's way, the boatman's way and the shepherd's way. The king's way of generating bodhicitta [rgyal po lta bu'i sems bskyed]: A king's first priority is to overcome all his rivals, to promote those who support him, and to proclaim himself sovereign. Only after his personal aims have been secured does he turn to the care of his subjects. Similarly, the wish to first attain buddhahood for oneself and then to bring others to buddhahood is called the king's way of generating bodhicitta.

The boatman's way of generating bodhicitta [mnyan pa lta bu'i sems bskyed]: A boatman aims to arrive on the other shore together with all of his passengers. Likewise, the wish to achieve buddhahood for oneself and all beings simultaneously is known as the boatman's way of generating bodhicitta.

The shepherd's way of generating bodhicitta [rdzi bo lta bu'i sems bskyed]: A shepherd drives his sheep in front of him, making sure that they find grass and water, and are not attacked by wild beasts, while he follows behind. In the same way, wishing to establish all beings of the three realms on the level of perfect enlightenment before attaining it for oneself is known as the shepherd's way of generating bodhicitta.

The king's way of generating bodhicitta is the least courageous of the three; the boatman's way is more courageous, and the shepherd's way is the most courageous of all. Only when all of your attention is directed toward attaining enlightenment for the benefit of all beings are you truly practicing bodhicitta.

Regardless of which of these three attitudes a practitioner may have, there are two styles or traditions of receiving the bodhisattva precepts [dom pa len tshul]. In Asaṅga's tradition the precepts for bodhicitta of aspiration and for bodhicitta of application are received separately. First the student receives the precepts for bodhicitta of aspiration [smon sems kyi sdom pa] and then trains his or her mind in the development of bodhicitta of aspiration. Only then will the student receive the precepts for bodhicitta of application ['jug sems kyi sdom pa]. In Nāgārjuna's tradition, on the other hand, the precepts for bodhicitta of aspiration and for bodhicitta of application are recevied together.

Asaṅga's style follows the 'tradition of vast activities' [rgya chen spyod pa'i lugs srol], which came through Bodhisattva Maitreya. This tradition for receiving the bodhisattva precepts is also known as the Cittamatra style [sems tsam pa lugs]. The teachers of this tradition believe that a beginner might be able to develop bodhicitta of aspiration, but will not be able to develop bodhicitta of application without prior training. Therefore, they give the two precepts separately.

Nāgārjuna's style follows the 'tradition of the profound view' [zab mo lta ba'i lugs srol], which came through Bodhisattva Mañjughoṣa. This style for receiving the bodhisattva precepts is also known as the Madyamaka style [dbu ma lugs].

To develop bodhicitta [sems bskyed pa] means to generate the bodhicitta thought, "I will liberate all beings from suffering and establish them on the level of perfect and complete enlightenment."

When receiving the bodhicitta precepts, one makes a 'promise' [khas len] and a 'commitment' [dam bca' ba] either before a qualified master who holds the lineage of bodhicitta precepts [byang sdom gi brgyud] or before a statue of the Buddha. Merely developing bodhicitta does not require an object [rten] such as a master or a statue, while receiving the bodhicitta precepts a master or at least a statue is indispensible.

A beginning student first entering Śrī Siṃha University will receive the refuge precepts [skyabs 'gro'i sdom pa] and the bodhisattva precepts [byang chub sems dpa'i sdom pa] from his teacher before beginning any study at all. As his personal daily practice, he will re-take the refuge precepts and the bodhisattva precepts during his daily liturgy.

Before each class at the Śrī Siṃha University, regardless of what the topic may be, the khenpo and his students will recite a liturgy for re-taking the refuge and bodhisattva precepts. This is of course also the case when the students are studying the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra.

When the students have completed the entire Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra, which generally involves three months of intensive study, each student will receive a 'bodhisattva name' [byang chub sems dpa'i ming] during an extensive concluding ceneromy. Through this ceremony the student officially becomes a bodhisattva. He has been transformed in name and meaning.

The concluding bodhisattva precepts and name-giving ceremony is conducted according to the tradition of Paltrül Rinpoche called 'the transfer-liturgy for the development of bodhicitta according to the lineage of the profound view, the Madyamaka tradition of Mahāyāna'.[65] During this ceremony the khenpo and the students recite the first three and the tenth chapter of the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra.

**Text section 96:**

For a practitioner who has the chance to receive the precepts from a qualified master in person, the master will naturally function as an object of *shame* [ngo tsha] and *embarrassment* [khrel]. Having received the precepts personally from a great master, the practitioner will feel ashamed of himself [rang ngo la ngo tsha] if he or she breaks the precepts. The practitioner will feel embarrassed in front of others [gzhan ngo la khrel], and especially in front of his master, if the master learns he has lost his precepts.

A qualified master here means a 'spiritual friend' [dge ba'i bshes gnyan] who is 'knowledgable in the Mahāyāna teachings' [theg chen gyi don la mkhas pa] and who would never forsake his bodhisattva precepts, even at the cost of his life [byang chub

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[65] zab mo lta ba'i rgyud pa theg chen dbu ma'i lugs kyi sems bskyed 'bogs chog

sems kyi sdom pa ni srog gi phyir du mi gtong ba]. For instance, a practitioner who knows all the teachings of the entire Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra, and who has taken them to heart, would be considered 'knowledgable in the Mahāyāna teachings'. Someone whose mind is so infused with bodhicitta that he could never possibly forsake it is qualified to give the bodhisattva precepts to others.

Such a person, even if he or she is a bodhisattva lay practitioner, is naturally endowed with the prātimokṣa precepts of a monk or nun. This is because of the principle that 'the higher qualities include the lower' [yon tan yar ldan]. The 'lower qualities' ['og ma'i yon tan] are always naturally included in the 'higher qualities' [gong ma'i yon tan]. The three sets of vows must be understood as being inseparable in essence [sdom gsum ngo bo dbyer med go dgos]. Thus, such a bodhisattva lay practitioner is without doubt qualified to pass on the bodhisattva precepts. Of course, a fully ordained monk or an accomplished yogin or a khenpo, are supremely qualified.

If you cannot find a qualified master, you should receive the precepts in the presence of one of the three representations of Mahāyāna, a Buddha statue, a book, or a stūpa. Statues represent the Buddha's body [sku rten]; Buddhist scriptures represent the Buddha's speech [gsun rten]; and stūpas represent the Buddha's mind [thugs rten].

One also may receive the precepts while visualizing the *field of accumulation* [tshogs zhing], as it is done during the refuge practice of the preliminaries [sngon 'gro].

**Text section 97:**

In front of a qualified master or a statue, one begins [sad par byed pa][66] with three petitions [dgongs su gsol ba]:[67] "All buddhas, bhagavans, who dwell in the ten directions, great bodhisattvas, who dwell on the tenth level, and great masters, vajra-holders, please consider me" [phyogs bcu na bzhugs pa'i sangs rgyas bcom ldan 'das thams cad dang / sa bcu la gnas pa'i byang chub sems dpa'i chen po rnams dang / bla ma rdo rje 'dzin pa chen po rnams bdag la dgongs su gsol].

In this petition one is calling upon all the buddhas, bodhisattvas and one's root guru, the vajra-holder. A vajra-holding master is a master who holds all three sets of precepts [sdom gsum] simultaneously, the precepts of individual liberation [so thar sdom pa], the precepts of bodhicitta [byang sdom] and the samayas of secret-mantra [gsang sngags kyi dam tshig]. He is called a 'three-fold vajra-holder' [gsum ldan rdo rje 'dzin pa].

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[66] According to Khenpo Sherab Zangpo, *sad par byed pa* means 'to preceed' or 'to come before' [sngon du 'gro ba]. According to Khenpo Chöga, *sad par byed pa* means 'to visualize' [gsal gdab pa] the buddhas and bodhisattvas as witnesses [dpang po'i yul].

[67] The term 'petition' or 'invocation' [dgongs su gsol] literally means 'please think of me' [nga la mkhyen rogs gnang] or 'please listen to me' [nga la gsan rogs gnang] or 'please look upon me' [nga la gzigs rogs gnang].

Next, lay the basis for receiving the bodhicitta precepts by first reciting stanza 26 from the second chapter of the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra, the lines of going for refuge:

> I go for refuge to the buddhas
> Until I attain the essence of awakening.
> Likewise I go for refuge to the dharma
> And to the gathering of bodhisattvas.

According to Asaṅga's tradition, one would now take the precepts of bodhicitta of aspiration and of application separately. The first two lines [rkang pa gnyis] of stanza 23 of the third chapter as well as the first two lines of stanza 24 cover bodhicitta of aspiration:

> Just as the sugatas of former times
> Directed their minds toward awakening,
>
> Likewise for the sake of all beings
> I give birth to bodhicitta.

The second two lines of stanza 23 and the second two lines of stanza 24 cover bodhicitta of application.

> And just as they established themselves by stages
> In the trainings of a bodhisattva;
>
> Likewise shall I also
> Practice the trainings by stages.

**Text section 98 / stanza 23:**

According to Nāgārjuna's tradition, students receive the precepts for bodhicitta of aspiration and bodhicitta of application together. For this, recite three times the following combination of stanzas: stanza 26 from the second chapter of the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra as the refuge, followed by stanza 23 and 24 of the third chapter in order to generate bodhicitta of aspiration and bodhicitta of application:

> I go for refuge to the buddhas
> Until I attain the essence of awakening.
> Likewise I go for refuge to the dharma
> And to the gathering of bodhisattvas.
>
> Just as the sugatas of former times
> Directed their minds toward awakening,
> And just as they established themselves by stages

In the trainings of a bodhisattva;

Likewise for the sake of all beings
I give birth to bodhicitta,
And likewise I shall also
Practice the trainings by stages.

When receiving the precept of bodhicitta of aspiration and application together, a student follows the example of the previous buddhas and bodhisattvas. In particular, students follow the example of Buddha Śākyamuni, who first developed bodhicitta before Buddha Mahā-Śākyamuni. They are also following the example of Bhikṣu Akṣobhya [dge slong mi ’khrugs pa], who first developed bodhicitta before Buddha Mahācana, and later became the Buddha Amitābha.

Following the example of the previous sugatas, try to actually emulate them, and develop bodhicitta with acceptance [khas len] and commitment [dam bca’ ba] as follows: “I will liberate all sentient beings from suffering and the causes of suffering and establish them on the level of perfect enlightenment.”

The *vast fields of training* [bslab par bya ba rgya chen po] refers to the six transcendental perfections and the ten bhumis. The phrase *from (the level of) a beginner* [las dang po pa nas] means from the minor path of accumulation [tshogs lam chung ngu nas] onward.

**Text section 99 / stanza 24 :**

*Confidence* [thob blo] means the thought, “I have obtained the precept” [sdom pa thob bo snyam pa’i blo] or “I possess the precept” [sdom pa nga la yod]. This confidence is needed in every ceremony of obtaining the precepts of individual liberation. You must generate such confidence when receiving the refuge precepts [skyabs ’gro’i sdom pa], the novice precepts [dge tshul sdom pa] and the precepts of monk ordination [dge slong gi sdom pa]. If you lack such confidence, then the precept has not taken birth in your mind, and you have not received the precepts at all. Do not let doubt enter into your mind at this very moment.

Once you have received the precepts in a ceremony for the first time, then you should take them from that moment onward in your daily liturgy. Some masters advise taking the bodhisattva precepts six or three times daily. At least recite the abovementioned stanzas from the second and third chapter once a day.

In general, receiving the bodhisattva precepts has a preparatory part [sbyor ba], a main part [dngos gzhi], and a concluding part [rjes]. The preparatory part consists of gathering the accumulation of merit [bsod nams kyi tshogs bsags pa] through the practice in seven sections[68] as taught in the second and third chapters, as well as the mind-

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[68] 1) The section on presenting offerings [mchod pa ’bul ba’i yan lag], 2) the section on paying respect [phyag ’tshal ba’i yan lag], 3) the section on confessing negativities [sdig pa bshags pa’i

training [blo sbyong] practices as taught in stanza eleven of the third chapter, together with dedicating the fruition of one's mental training for the benefit of others, as taught in stanzas eighteen through twenty-two.[69]

The main part of receiving the bodhisattva commitments [dam bca' ba] is covered by stanza 26 of the second chapter, recited in conjunction with stanzas 23 and 24 of the third chapter. During the ceremony of receiving the bodhisattva precepts, the students repeat these three stanzas after the master. Upon completion of the third repetition, the master snaps his fingers and at that moment the student must think, "I have received the precepts for bodhicitta of aspiration and for bodhicitta of application."

Then the master will continue with the stanzas of the concluding sections, which are generating joy about oneself as taught in stanzas 26 and 27 of the third chapter, and causing others to generate joy as taught in stanza 34 of the third chapter.[70]

**Text section 100**

Master Sāgaramegha [rgya mtsho'i sprin] explained why students must repeat the bodhicitta precepts three times. He said that through the first repetition of the bodhcitta precepts in stanzas 23 and 24 of the third chapter, one receives bodhicitta of aspiration, through the second repetition one receives bodhicitta of application and through the third one stabilizes both.

A beginning practitioner *should be diligent in practicing bodhicitta* [byang sems sbyang ba la brtson dgos pa] by remembering again and again the lines of the four immeasurables [tshad med bzhi], immeasurable kindness [byams pa tshad med], immeasurable compassion [snying rje tshad med], immeasurable sympathetic joy [dga' ba tshad med], and immeasurable equanimity [btang snyoms tshad med]. Train your mind by reciting the lines:

> May all beings have happiness and the causes for happiness.
> May they be free from suffering and the causes for suffering.
> May they never be separated from sublime happiness devoid of suffering.
> May they remain in boundless equanimity, without attachment to friends
> or aversion to enemies.
>
> sems can thams cad bde ba dang bde ba'i rgyu dang ldan par gyur cig
> sdug bsngal dang sdug bsngal gyi rgyu dang bral bar gyur cig

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yan lag], 4) the section on rejoicing [rjes su yi rang ba'i yan lag], 5) the section on requesting (the buddhas) to turn the wheel of dharma [chos 'khor bar bskul ba'i yan lag], 6) the section on supplicating (the buddhas) not to enter into nirvāṇa [mya ngan las mi 'da' bar gsol ba 'debs pa'i yan lag], and 7) the section on dedicating the merit for the benefit of others [dge rtsa gzhan don du sngo ba'i yan lag].

69 Mind training can also be counted as belonging to the main part.

70 See Paltrül Rinpoche's *byang sdom blang chog*.

sdug bsngal med pa'i bde ba dam pa dang mi 'bral bar gyur cig
nye ring chags sdang gnyis dang bral ba'i btang snyoms tshad med pa la gnas par gyur cig

Also practice mind-training by reciting stanza eleven of this chapter. Meditate on the meaning and practice according to the instructions given by Paltrül Rinpoche on giving away the three bases of ego-clinging [bdag tu 'dzin pa'i gzhi gsum po]. Recite:

My body and likewise my enjoyments
And even all my virtue of the three times
I shall give up without any sense of loss
So that I will accomplish the welfare of all beings.

lus dang de bzhin longs spyod dang //
dus gsum dge ba thams cad kyang //
sems can kun gyi don sgrub phyir //
phongs pa med par btang bar bya //

Be careful not to slip into reciting these lines mechanically. The main point is to transform your mind, to cut through the clinging to self-centered wishes and to develop the motivation to benefit others. Therefore, it is better to recite the lines of the four immeasurables, the lines of mind-training and the lines of bodhicitta in your own language until you understand them fluently in Tibetan. You must strive to truly feel bodhicitta in your heart.

A practitioner should take the bodhicitta precepts [byang sdom len pa] by himself daily many times. The more often you take the precepts the more you reinforce your commitment [dam bca'].

During your daily activities remember bodhicitta as an aspiration [smom lam ltar tu] and think or say, "May all sentient beings be liberated from their sufferings and established on the level of perfect enlightenment." Or, if you have already gained more confidence, generate the commitment [dam bca' ba], "I will liberate all sentient beings from their sufferings and establish them on the level of perfect enlightenment." Thus, practice bodhicitta of aspiration again and again.

You can also practice bodhicitta of application in your daily activities, for instance, while washing your dishes you can think, "In order to liberate all sentient beings from their sufferings and establish them on the level of perfect enlightenment, I will clean these dishes. In the same way, I will purify the obscurations of body, speech and mind of all sentient beings."

Reciting the 'liturgy for receiving the bodhicitta precepts'[71] according to Paltrül Rinpoche's tradition is a supreme practice. We have now outlined the three main

[71] *byang sdom blang chog*

practices for developing bodhicitta: the four immeasurables, giving away the three bases of ego-clinging, and receiving the bodhicitta precepts.

**Text section 101:**

The Sakyapas define the term 'by stages', 'successively', or 'step by step' [rim pa bzhin du], according to which root downfalls [rtsa ltung] the bodhisattva is capable of avoiding. Bodhisattvas of highest capacity pledge to avoid the eighteen or the fourteen downfalls, those of mediocre capacity pledge to avoid four, and those of lowest capacity merely strive not to lose their bodhicitta of aspiration and application.[72]

The bare minimum of bodhisattva precepts is trying not to forget bodhicitta. Remember to your best ability the commitment, "I will free all sentient beings from suffering and the causes of suffering and I will establish them on the level of unsurpassable happiness." Know that the highest form of happiness, unsurpassable bliss, is the state of perfect enlightenment, of buddhahood. The unsurpassable or ultimate happiness of enlightenment is endowed with the 'seven vajra-like qualities'.[73] This state is called 'vast awakening' or 'buddhahood'. The sincere wish that all beings may be free from suffering and may attain that kind of happiness is called the precious bodhicitta.

Also realize that the precious dharma is the cause for such unsurpassable happiness. The dharma is nothing other than the virtuous mind-set of renunciation, compassion, faith, loving-kindness, rejoicing, equanimity, generosity, discipline, patience, dilligence, meditative absorption, wisdom and so forth.

Of course a beginner will forget bodhicitta from time to time. That does not constitute an infraction or the loss of the bodhisattva precepts. But to think, "Bodhicitta is actually a useless thought. It does not interest me any longer. I will no longer practice bodhicitta," does constitute the destruction of bodhicitta. By disrespecting bodhicitta in this manner, one forsakes all buddhas as well as all sentient beings.

Consider the thought of bodhicitta to be the true child of the buddhas, the true mother of all sentient beings. With this thought, you are able to achieve buddhahood. Without this thought, buddhahood is impossible.

Bodhicitta has two aspects, compassion and wisdom-knowledge. With compassion one focuses on benefiting others [snying rjes gzhan don la dmigs pa] through the steadfast resolve: "I will free all beings from suffering and the causes of suffering." This is the compassionate aspect of the bodhicitta motivation, which covers the truth of suffering

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[72] For a detailed listing of these different sets of root downfalls, see *Buddhist Ethics*, pages 175-179.

[73] The seven vajra-like qualities [rdo rje'i chos bdun] are: 1) uncuttable [mi chod pa], 2) indestructible [mi shigs pa], 3) true [bden pa], 4) firm [sra ba], 5) stable [brtan pa], 6) unobstructable [thogs pa med pa] and 7) unassailable [ma pham pa].

and the truth of origination. The term 'suffering' refers to the truth of suffering and the term 'causes of suffering' refers to the truth of origination.

With wisdom-knowledge one focuses on perfect enlightenment [shes rab kyis rdzogs byang la dmigs pa] through the steadfast resolve: "I will establish all sentient beings on the level of happiness and the cause for happiness." Happiness refers to the happiness of perfect enlightenment, the truth of cessation. The causes for happiness refer to the path that leads to cessation, the truth of the path. Thus, bodhicitta includes all the teachings on the four noble truths.

As long as you carry the thought of bodhicitta in your mind, you are an 'ordinary being bodhisattva' [sems can byang chub sems dpa']. Due to that thought you have become a bodhisattva in meaning and in name. From now on maintain the firm resolve to practice the dharma. Commit to practice the four immeasurables [tshad med pa bzhi], as well as the five noble thoughts of renunciation [nges 'byung], compassion [snying rje], faith [dad pa], loving-kindness [byams pa] and wisdom [shes rab]. Commit further to practice the six transcendental perfections of generosity, discipline, patience, diligence, meditative absorption and wisdom. In your daily life avoid the ten non-virtuous deeds and practice the ten virtuous deeds. Repeatedly formulate these commitments in your mind. This is of utmost importance.

**Text section 102:**

The Sakyapas also align the three disciplines of a bodhisattva with the five paths [lam lnga]: On the path of accumulation [tshogs lam] a practitioner must mainly practice (1) the discipline of refraining from negative conduct [nyes spyod sdom pa'i tshul khrims]. To refrain from negative conduct means not to commit any non-virtuous deed [mi dge ba'i phyogs mi byed pa]. On the path of application [sbyor lam] a practitioner must mainly practice (2) the discipline of gathering virtuous dharmas [dge ba chos sdud gyi tshul khrims]. He or she strives to practice as much virtue as possible. On the three exalted paths ['phags lam], a practitioner practices mainly (3) the discipline of fulfilling the benefit of sentient beings [sems can don byed kyi tshul khrims]. The three exalted paths are the path of seeing [mthong lam], the path of meditation [sgom lam], and the path of no more learning [mi slob pa'i lam].

A bodhisattva must always train in accord with his or her mental capacity [blo nus]. A beginner should first practice by donating food, while advanced bodhisattvas train in giving away their own bodies. In this manner we progress from easy topics of training to the most difficult. Without training in accord with your true capacity, you will only become a fake imitation [gzugs brnyen] of an advanced bodhisattva. As it is said: "Acting as if, without being capable, is merely imitation" [mi nus de 'jug de yi gzugs brnyen].

**Text section 103:**

Within our own Nyingma tradition we are clearly instructed to train *by stages* or *successively*, in other words in accordance with our own capacities. In this way our ability to keep the bodhisattva precepts will gradually improve.

**Text section 104:**

After receiving the bodhicitta precepts, the new bodhisattva should generate joy [dga' ba bsgom] about the sublime dharma [dam pa'i chos] he or she has obtained. He has become a child of the buddhas, a mother to all sentient beings. This practice of rejoicing is very significant. The dharma should only be practiced in a joyous state of mind, a lucid state of mind [sems dvang ba]. The dharma should not be practiced as a mere duty you feel compelled to fulfill. The dharma should never be practiced as a tiresome struggle. Bodhicitta is the path of bliss [lam bde ba byang chub sems]. This means that one practices the teachings on bodhicitta in a joyous state of mind, without any hardship.

Paltrül Rinpoche's mind was so infused with bodhicitta and joy that even harmful spirits ['dre] smiled in his presence. Demons and evil spirits can never harm a person who is infused with bodhicitta and kindness. They can only harm negative minded and frightened people. Paltrül Rinpoche's presence pacified the spirits and demons, and made them happy. Such is bodhicitta's power. It is the supreme method to subdue spirits and demons.

At this point in the ceremony of receiving the bodhisattva precepts, the student recites stanzas 26, 27 and 28 from the following section on generating joy about oneself.

**Text section 105 / stanza 25:**

The phrase an *intelligent person, endowed with wisdom* [blo shes rab dang ldan pa] refers to a beginning bodhisattva who has just adoped bodhicitta. Since bodhicitta must be practiced with a mind that is pure [sems dang ba / sems dvang ba] and joyous [sems dga' ba], the student now should inspire, encourage or uplift [gzengs bstod] his or her mind. It is crucial for a practitioner to remind himself of the good things he has done in this life. This builds confidence [spobs pa] in his mind. Tell yourself, "Now bodhicitta has taken birth in my mind. This is the best thing a person can do in this life. Nothing in this entire universe is superior to bodhicitta. I did well."

From time to time every practitioner should draw a balance sheet of his or her life. He or she should recognize both the good and bad things he has done. Regretting sincerely the bad deeds, he firmly resolves not to repeat them. However, he must also remember his good deeds and in this way inspire and encourage himself. Such building of confidence [spobs pa] is extremely important for a dharma practitioner. A person who can recall his or her virtuous deeds is a person at ease, with a mind that is very clear and lucid [rab tu dvang ba]. When a practitioner's mind is up-lifted and confident, he or she will not get carried away by positive or negative circumstances.

A beginning bodhisattva strengthens his mind through mind-training [blo sbyong ba], the preliminary part of the ceremony [sbyor ba'i cho ga]. The main ceremony [dngos gzhi'i cho ga] is the actual receiving of the bodhicitta precepts.

The term 'inspire' [gzengs bstod], also rendered as 'encourage', or 'uplift', connotes infusing one's mind with confidence [spobs pa] and courage [dpa' ba]. A beginning bodhisattva should feel like the 'crown prince' [rgyal sras] whose position has been acknowledged through a ceremony. To generate this feeling of confidence and courage ministers and presidents are confirmed by inauguration ceremonies, armies hold parades, and countries celebrate national days.

Likewise, when a beginning bodhisattva has completed the preliminary practices of mind-training and the main ceremony of receiving the bodhicitta precepts, he should rejoice in his own achievement. He should trust [yid chad pa] that bodhicitta is the right path and that he is able to walk this path. He should actually feel happy from within that he has now become a bodhisattva. A bodhisattva should not be full of self-doubt thinking, "I am not sure if I can practice bodhicitta" since such self-doubt will undermine his courage.

**Text section 106 / stanza 26:**

The precious human body [mi lus rin po che] is considered a very 'positive achievement' [legs pa thob pa] since it is the boat to liberation. It is not a *negative achievement* [nyes pa thob pa]. When one's conduct is proper, the human body serves as a boat to liberation. On the other hand, when one's conduct is bad, the human body becomes a stone dragging one further into saṃsāra.

At this concluding part ot the ceremony you have become a bodhisattva and progress on the path toward perfect enlightenment is in your own power. Do not misuse the unique chance this precious human body provides merely to continue traveling on a path that leads directly to rebirth in the hell realms.

Think, "Right now, I am making use of this unique chance and I am practicing the sublime dharma. I have become a beginning bodhisattva. I have joined the family of the buddhas. In the future I will become someone who upholds the continuity of the sublime dharma [dam pa'i chos kyi rguyn 'dzin mkhan]." The person who maintains the family lineage, who carries on the succession of the family lineage, is usually the eldest son. Think that, by having received the bodhicitta precepts, you have now become a child who carries on the family lineage [gdung brgyud 'dzin pa'i sras] of the buddhas.

A person who attains a human rebirth but who commits many negative deeds [sdig pa] will go to the three lower realms. Others, who practice virtue, will go to the higher realms. One who has received the bodhisattva vows should generate joy for himself because he will now progress to higher and higher levels. A bodhisattva becomes a child of the buddhas. Actually think, "I have received the bodhisattva precepts and I will practice the genuine dharma. Today I have become a child of the buddhas. I have joined *the family of the buddhas* [sansg rgyas kyi rigs]. I will act in accordance with the

conduct of this family." Recognize your good fortune and commit yourself to practice virtue.

The children of the buddhas are like lion cubs [seng phrug]. They might be clumsy at first, but eventually they will grow into powerful lions. To behave according to the family of the Buddha means to practice virtue and to avoid non-virtue to the best of one's abilities.

**Text section 107 / stanza 27:**

Since you have now become a bodhisattva, you must pledge to act in accord with the *Mahāyāna family* [theg chen gyi rigs] through your conduct of body, speech and mind. The Mahāyāna family of the bodhisattvas is a *noble family* [btsun pa'i rigs], noble in body, speech and mind [lus ngag yid gsum gtsun po]. Noble in body means not committing non-virtue with one's body [lus kyi mi dge ba mi byed pa]. A bodhisattva avoids (1) taking life [srog gcod pa], (2) taking what is not given [ma byin par len pa], and (3) sexual misconduct [log g.yem]. Noble in speech means not committing non-virtue with one's voice [ngag gi mi dge ba mi byed pa]. A bodhisattva avoids (4) speaking lies [rdzun smra ba], (5) sowing discord [phra ma byed pa], (6) harsh words [tshig rtsub], and (7) worthless chatter [ngag kyal]. Noble in mind means not committing non-virtue with one's mind [sems kyi mi dge ba mi byed pa]. A bodhisattva avoids (8) covetousness [rnab sems], (9) wishing harm to others [gnod sems] and (10) wrong views [log lta]. Thus, since the bodhisattvas are *unsullied by the stains of downfalls, they are noble* [ltung ba'i skyon dang bral bas na btsun pa].

The phrase *like a son following in his father's footsteps* [pha rjes bus zin par byas nas] connotes that a bodhisattva follows in the footsteps of the Buddha, the father of all bodhisattvas, and gathers the two accumulations for three incalculable aeons and traverses the path of the bodhisattvas to complete enlightenment.

*Never shall I defile* [rnyog par mi 'gyur ba] means to never pollute one's mind with afflictions such as anger [kho khro], jealousy [phrag dog] and so forth, since these stains will lead to downfalls [nyes ltung]. A bodhisattva vows to exert himself with body speech and mind in the trainings of the bodhisattvas.

**Text section 108 / stanza 28:**

To obtain a human rebirth, to meet the dharma, to find a qualified teacher and to generate bodhicitta are extremely rare. It is as fortunate as a blind man finding a jewel in a heap of dust. It is a fortunate *coincidence* [stes dbang][74] that has come about through the interdependence of causes and conditions [rgyu rkyen rten 'brel gyi dbang] such as the kindness of one's teacher [bla ma dge ba'i bshes gnyen gyi thugs rje] and one's own

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[74] stas dbang / las dbang: coincidence / by accident / by chance / accidental / coincidental / fortuitous

merit of former lifetimes [rang gi tshe sngon ma'i bsod nams]. Many people aspire to bodhicitta, but real bodhicitta does not arise easily.

**Text sections 109-111 / stanza 29:**

The realization in the mind of the Buddha [thugs kyi mkhyen pa] is beyond any dualistic fixation on saṃsāra or nirvāṇa. The Buddha dwells constantly in the perfect and inconceivable bliss of samadhi, beyond any form of suffering. Yet, in the deluded perception of worldly beings he appears to be subject to birth, old age, sickness and death. Although this is how he appears in the perception of deluded beings, the Buddha himself is actually not at all tainted by the impediments of birth, old age, sickness and death.

Buddha has attained the *abode of deathless peace* ['chi med zhi ba'i gnas], the absolute [dam dam pa]. He has thus gone beyond the 'confines of permanence and impermanence' [rtag dang mi rtag pa'i mtha' las 'das pa]. He is liberated from the influence of the four māras: 1) the māra of afflictions [nyon mongs pa'i bdud]; 2) the māra of the divine son [lha'i bu yi bdud], which is procrastination; 3) the māra of death ['chi bdag gi bdud], which is impermanence; and 4) the māra of the skandhas [phung po'i bdud].

Death, a momentary phenomenon, belongs to the level of relative truth [kun rdzob glo bur ba'i chos]. On the level of absolute truth there is neither birth nor death. Thus, the māra of death does not exist on the level of absolute truth.

Bodhicitta is considered to be a *nectar* or ambrosia [bdud rtsi] that defeats the lord of death. The most feared among the four māras is the māra of death, since he causes every single being to die. Only the Buddha has utterly defeated all four māras. When bodhicitta is called the nectar that defeats the lord of death, this means that bodhicitta takes anyone who practices it, to buddhahood, the great awakening [byang chub chen po].

*An untimely death* [dus min kyi 'chi ba] means to die before one's actual lifespan has been completed. An untimely death is caused by momentary circumstances ['phral gyi rkyen], like an airplane accident and so forth. Bodhicitta has the power to remove temporary obstacles [gnas skabs kyi bar chad] and thus avert untimely death. A timely death is one determined by previous karma [sngon gyi las]. Bodhicitta also has the power to prolong a practitioner's life. Ultimately, bodhicitta will take the practitioner to complete and perfect enlightenment, beyond the confines of birth and death. Generate joy about this inconceivable quality of bodhicitta.

**Text section 110:**

The *vidyādharas*, the knowledge-holders [rig'dzin] among the gods, nāgas and humans, are said to be able to manufacture a *longevity nectar* [tshe sgrub pa'i bdud rtsi] with the power to prolong life for many hundreds of years. Bodhicitta is even more powerful than such a nectar since it averts untimely death and ultimately grants complete enlightenment.

*Poverty* [dbul ba] generally refers to people who suffer from physical poverty [lus kyi dbul ba] and for instance have nothing to eat. Others, who can never have enough, are suffering from mental poverty [sems kyi dbul ba]. Many more beings suffer from mental poverty than from physical poverty.

Bodhisattvas from the eighth level onward are said to have power over all material things they might need [yo byad la rang dbang thob pa]. They can simply take the object [cha lag] directly out of space. This is a special accomplishment, a siddhi [dngos grub]. For such bodhisattvas space is completely filled with everything that is needed. This is called the 'sky-treasury' [nam mkha' mdzod].

In many rituals practitioners recite the 'sky-treasury-mantra' [nam mkha' mdzod gyi sngags], blessing space to be entirely filled with offering substances. Based on the words of the truth of the mantra [sngags kyi bden tshig], in conjunction with the sky-treasury-mudra [nam mkha' mdzod gyi phyag rgya] and the appropriate concentration [ting nge 'dzin], many spirits and beings without physical bodies, are able to enjoy these offering substances. Through the power of mantra, mudra and samadhi a practitioner can utilize the sky-treasury for offerings, while an eighth level bodhisattva constantly has direct access to the sky-treasury. Bodhicitta is like this inexhausible sky-treasury since it grants beings whatever they need and thus eliminates their poverty. Generate joy about this quality of bodhicitta.

**Text section 112 / stanza 30:**

Bodhicitta is also the best of all medicines. The causes of disease are the afflictions of stupidity, desire and anger. The disease of afflictions is the cause of all diseases. Desire leads to wind disease [rlung], anger to bile disease ['khris pa], and stupidity to phlegm disease [bad kan]. These diseases are the fruition of the three mind poisons. As a remedy for desire [chags pa] the bodhisattvas teach meditation on ugliness [mi sdug pa], as a remedy for anger [sdang ba] they teach meditation on loving-kindness, and as a remedy for stupidity [rmongs pa] they teach meditation on interdependent origination and egolessness. Through these meditations they first pacify the causes for disease, which are the three mind-poisons. Then these meditations pacify the results of these poisons, which are the three diseases of wind, bile and phlegm. Bodhicitta is the best of all medicines because it has this great power.

Because the mind is plagued by afflictions, beings are attacked by disease-causing demons [gdon]—nāgas, demons and spirits [klu gnyen sa bdag]—and by the three groups of diseases—wind disease [rlung], bile disease ['khris pa], and phlegm disease [bad kan]. Stupidity gives rise to phlegm diseases and nāga-caused diseases [klu'i na tsha]; anger leads to bile diseases and demon-caused diseases [gnyen gyi na tsha]; and desire to wind diseases and diseases caused by local spirits [sa bdag gi na tsha]. When the mind is entirely free of afflictions, that being is free from diseases and disease-causing demons no longer exist for him.

**Text section 113 / stanza 30:**

The *Prajñā-pāramitā-abhisamayālaṃkāra* [sher phyin mngon rtogs rgyan][75] states: *"Those who seek the peace of the śrāvakas will be guided to complete peace through knowing all"* [nyon thos zhi ba tshol mkhan kun shes nyid kyis nyer zhi khrid mdzad].

The term *śrāvaka* [nyon thos] refers to the 'eight types of śrāvaka' [nyan thos dgra bcom pa brgyad].[76] Those who have an affinity for the śrāvaka vehicle [nyan thos kyi rigs can] are those who seek the *peace* [zhi ba] of nirvāṇa [mya ngan las 'das pa].

In the phrase *through knowing all* [kun shes nyid kyis] the word *all* [kun] refers to knowing the truth of suffering [sdug bsngal gyi bden pa], the truth of origination of suffering [kun 'byung gi bden pa], the five skandhas [phung po lnga], the eighteen elements [khams bco brgyad], the twelve sense fields [skye mched bcu gnyis], and so forth. The root of *all* these saṃsāric dharmas is ego-clinging ['khor ba'i chos kun gyi rtsa ba bdag 'dzin]. The word *knowing* [shes pa] connotes knowing that all these saṃsāric dharmas are without a personal identity [bdag med pa]. In short, the phrase *knowing all* [kun shes] is the 'wisdom of realizing the non-existence of a personal identity' [bdag med rtogs pa'i shes rab]. That is also the reason why Buddha's disciple Kauṇḍinya has the epithet 'the all-knowing' [kun shes].

Through the realization of the non-existence of a personal identity in all these saṃsāric dharmas the śrāvaka practitioner will be guided to *complete peace* [nyer zhi / nyer bar zhi ba], which means liberation [thar pa] or cessation ['gog pa], the attainment of an arhat. Complete peace means that the fire of suffering [sdug bsngal gyi me] has been completely pacified.

*Guided* [khrid mdzad / khrid par mdzad pa] means guided along the path [lam]. The truth of the śrāvaka path [nyan thos lam gyi bden pa] is the realization of the non-existence of a personal identity [bdag med rtogs pa'i shes rab]. Through the total knowledge [kun shes], the knowledge of knowing that all saṃsāric dharmas are devoid of a personal identity, the śrāvaka practitioner is guided to *complete peace*, to liberation.

*Worldly existence* [srid pa] refers to the three realms of saṃsāric existence [srid pa khams gsum 'khor ba] and *peace* [zhi ba] refers to the peace of nirvāṇa [zhi ba mya ngan las 'das pa].

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75 See *sher phyin rtsa 'grel*, page 2

76 This refers to the four 'beginners' [zhugs pa] and four 'dwellers' [gnas pa] on each of the four levels of śrāvaka attainment. These 'eight beginners and dwellers' [zhugs gnas brgyad] are: 1) a beginning stream-enterer [rgyun zhugs zhugs pa], 2) someone who dwells on the fruition of a stream-enterer [rgyun zhugs 'bras gnas], 3) a beginning once-returner [phyir 'ong zhugs pa], 4) someone who dwells on the fruition of a once-returner [phyir 'ong 'bras gnas], 5) a beginning non-returner [phyir mi 'ong zhugs pa], 6) someone who dwells on the fruition of a non-returner [phyir mi 'ong 'bras gnas], 7) a beginning arhat [dgra bcom zhugs pa] and 8) someone who dwells on the fruition of an arhat [dgra bcom 'bras gnas]. See *Illuminator* zhugs gnas brgyad.

Bodhisattvas must know the *paths of three vehicles* [theg gsum kyi lam],[77] (1) the path of the śrāvakas [nyan thos kyi lam], (2) the path of the pratyekabuddhas [rang sangs rgyas kyi lam], and (3) the path of the bodhisattvas [byang chub sems dpa'i lam]. All the points of the śrāvaka and pratyekabuddha paths are naturally included within the bodhisattva path of the Mahāyāna. When teaching, a bodhisattva must know all the key points of view [lta ba], meditation [sgom pa], conduct [spyod pa] and fruition ['bras bu] of the paths of all three vehicles, since he or she must be able to teach all beings of lower, mediocre and higher capacity. The capacity to teach all types of sentient beings comes from the power of bodhicitta.

Persons of lesser capacity [skyes bu chu ngu / dbang po tha ma] are those who practice virtue that concords with worldly merit ['jig rten pa'i bsod nam cha mthun gyi dge ba] and who are worldly persons ['jig rten pa]. These are people who practice the ten virtuous actions [dge ba bcu] in order to reach the three higher realms of saṃsāra. To those beings of lower capacity the bodhisattva teaches the 'genuine worldly view' ['jig rten yang dag pa'i lta ba], which includes the ten virtuous actions, karma, the law of cause and effect and so forth. Those beings would not be able to understand and practice the view, meditation, and conduct of the śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas.

Persons of mediocre capacity [skyes bu 'bring / dbang po 'bring] are those who have an affinity for the śrāvaka and pratyekabuddha vehicles [nyan rang gi rigs can]. They practice the virtue that concords with liberation [thar pa cha mthun gyi dge ba] of the Hīnayāna.

Persons of the highest capacity are those who have an affinity for the bodhisattva vehicle [theg chen gyi rigs can]. They practice the virtue that concords with the liberation of the Mahāyāna [theg chen thar pa cha mthun gyi dge ba], virtue that is embraced by bodhicitta.

**Text sections 114-115 / stanza 31:**

Based on the power of bodhicitta, the bodhisattvas establish ordinary beings, those of lowest capacity, in the higher realms [mngon mtho], on the level of humans and gods [lha mi'i go 'phang].[78] They establish those of mediocre capacity, those with an affinity for the Hīnayāna, on the path of the śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas. Beings of mediocre capacity will thus reach the fruitions of the Hīnayāna [theg dman gyi nges legs], the levels of attainment of the śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas. Without a human body, reaching any of these levels is very difficult. Finally, those of highest capacity, those with an affinity for the Mahāyāna, will be established on the Mahāyāna path,

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77 The terms 'vehicle' [theg pa], 'to guide' [khrid pa] and 'palanquin' [spyi stegs] have the same connotation.

78 While the asura realm is generally considered to be one of the three higher realms, the specific term 'higher realms' [mngon mtho] only refers to the god and human realms since in the asura realms the affliction of jealousy is so strong that it prevents the asuras from practicing the dharma.

which leads them to complete enlightenment. Eventually the bodhisattvas will even establish beings of lesser and of mediocre capacity on the path of Mahāyāna. This means that beings of lesser capacity, those who have just been liberated from the lower realms and established in the three higher realms, will gradually be led to the path of the Mahāyāna. Those beings who have reached the fruitions of the Hīnayāna, the levels of the śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas, will at a certain point be awakened from their state of cessation by the buddhas and bodhisattvas and will be gradually led into the Mahāyāna path.

Thus bodhisattvas are able to teach ordinary beings the ten virtuous actions, what to do and what to avoid, and lead them to the three higher realms of saṃsāra, the god realm [lha], the asura realm [lha ma yin] and the human realm [mi]. The *three lower realms* [ngan song gsum] are the hell realm [dmyal ba], the preta realm [yi dvags], and the animal realm [dud 'gro].

Since bodhicitta liberates beings from the lower realms, it is also called a *staircase* [spyi stegs / them skas], a 'universal platform' [spyi stegs] or a 'general lift' [spyi stegs]. 'Universal platform' [spyi stegs] means that bodhicitta functions as a general lift [thun mong ba'i stegs] or bridge [zam pa] for all sentient beings, good or bad, high or low. Since bodhicitta takes all sentient beings to liberation and omniscience it can be called a 'universal platform', a 'common lift', or 'public transport'.

Bodhicitta is also a *palanquin* [spyi stegs] or a 'sedan chair' [gyom khri], which is hung on a wooden pole and carried by two people. It is also a 'stretcher' [gyom khri] for those who are wounded in battle. Bodhicitta is the 'universal platform of (all) paths' [lam spyi'i stegs].

The result or fruition of the three vehicles [theg pa gsum gyi nges legs / theg pa gsum gyi 'bras bu] refers to levels of liberation [thar pa] and omniscience [thams cad mkhyen pa]. The result of the śrāvaka-yāna [nyan thos kyi theg pa'i nges legs] is the level of a śrāvaka-arhat [nyan thos kyi dgra bcom pa]. The result of the pratyekabuddha-yāna [rang sangs rgyas kyi theg pa'i nges legs] is the level of a pratyekabuddha-arhat [rang sangs rgyas kyi dgra bcom pa]. The result of the bodhisattva-yāna [byan chub sems dpa'i theg pa'i nges legs] is the level of buddhahood [sangs rgyas kyi go 'phang].

In order to reach any of the fruitions of the three vehicles, one must first attain a rebirth in the higher realms [mngon mtho] of the gods and humans. Thus, bodhicitta is explained as a *general platform for the path* [lam spyi'i stegs].

Rejoice that bodhicitta also overcomes obscurations of affliction. The phrase 'eventually, even together with (all) those' [mthar de rnams dang bcas pa] means that 'eventually, together with those of lower and of mediocre capacity' [mthar blo chung ngu dang blo 'bring po de rnams dang bcas pa]. That is the ultimate 'aim', 'wish' or *objective* [bzhed don / dmigs yul] of the bodhisattvas. To establish all beings, even eventually those of lower and mediocre capacity, on the level of buddhahood is the ultimate objective of the bodhisattvas.

The main function [byed las] of the obscurations of affliction [nyon mongs pa'i sgrib pa] is to cause obstacles [bar du gcod pa] for the attainment of liberation [thar pa] and nirvāṇa

[mya ngan las 'das pa] for the śrāvakas [nyon thos] and pratyekabuddhas [rang sangs rgyas]. The obscurations of affliction are the primary obstacles for the attainment of liberation [gtso bor thar pa la bar du gcod pa'i nyon sgrib]. Bodhicitta is compared to the rising moon, whose cooling nature eliminates the fire of affliction.

**Text section 116:**

Inspired by Maitreyanātha [mgon po byams pa], Asaṅga [thogs med] delcared that all concepts such as stinginess and so forth are considered to be obscurations of affliction [nyon sgrib]. The six types of affliction [nyon mongs drug] are the direct causes that propel beings into birth in one of the six realms. According to which of the six afflictions predominates in a being's mind-stream, he takes rebirth in one of the six realms.

Anger [zhe sdang] is the main cause for taking rebirth in the hell realm; stinginess [ser sna] leads to rebirth in the realm of the pretas (hungry ghosts); and stupidity [gti mug] results in rebirth in the animal realm. Desire ['dod chags] is the major cause for rebirth in the human realm; jealousy [phrag dog] is the force that hurls us into birth among the asuras; and pride [nga rgyal] leads to rebirth in the realm of the gods.

Another enumeration of 'six main afflictions' [rtsa nyon drug] includes the following: ignorance [ma rig pa], desire ['dod chags], aggression [khong khro], pride [nga rgyal], doubt [the tshom], and wrong views [lta ba].

Afflictions are not conducive for developing the six perfections. The six transcendental perfections counteract affliction. The opposite [ldog phyogs] of stinginess [ser sna] is generosity [sbyin pa]; the opposite of abusiveness ['tshe ba] and desire ['dod chags] is discipline [tshul khrims]; the opposite of anger [khong khro ba] is patience [bzod pa]; the opposite of laziness [le lo] is diligence [brtson 'grus]; the opposite of distraction [g.yeng ba] is concentration [bsam gtan] and samadhi [tin nge 'dzin]; and the opposite of ignorance [ma rigs pa] and stupidity [gti mug] is wisdom-knowledge [shes rab].

These afflictions are all coarse concepts [rnam rtog rags pa] that do not accord with the six transcendental perfections. Rejoice that bodhicitta utterly disples the obscurations of affliction, just like the cooling nature of moon dispels the heat of the day.

While the *coarse* concepts [rnam rtog rags pa], the afflictions of obscuration [nyon sgrib], are overcome through the practice of the first five transcendental perfections, the *subtle* concepts [rnam rtog phra ba], the obscuration of cognition [shes sgrib], are only overcome by the transcendental perfection of wisdom-knowledge [shes rab].

**Text section 117 / stanza 32:**

Rejoice that bodhicitta also overcomes obscurations of cognition [shes sgrib]. The main function [byed las] of cognitive obscuration is to cause obstacles to the attainment of omniscience [thams cad mkhyen pa], of buddhahood. All obscurations of affliction automatically contain obscurations of cognition. But obscurations of cognition are not necessarily accompanied by obscurations of affliction.

Obscurations of cognition require the presence of three factors or spheres ['khor gsum]: object [yul], subject [yul can] and the interaction [bya ba] between them. If fixation on these three factors is maintained in the mind of a bodhisattva, he is still under the power of cognitive obscuration.

*Misty* [rab rib] connotes being 'unclear' [gsal po med pa]. The phrase *the nature of things* [dngos po rnams kyi de nyid] means 'the ultimate nature of things' [dngos po rmans kyi de kho na nyid / dngos po rnams kyi gnas lugs]. Bodhicitta is like a great sun that dispels the darkness of ignorance by removing all traces of cognitive obscuration and thus revealing the omniscience of the Buddha.

**Text section 118 / stanza 32:**

All thoughts that function between the three factors ['khor gsum rnam par rtog pa'i rnam rtog] are considered to be cognitive obscurations, obscurations of cognition. These three factors prevent the practitioner from recognizing the natural state [shes bya'i gnas lugs la mthong mi thub par gso gi yod red], absolute bodhicitta [dam dam byang chub sems]. Absolute bodhicitta, the recognition of wisdom, does not maintain the three factors ['khor gsum mi dmigs pa'i ye shes].

Being captured by the three factors, your scope of knowledge becomes extremely limited. For instance, if you think about a cup, you are focusing at that moment on one single object. You are limited to that very object and cannot think about any other. This is because the moment we think of something we fixate on it. Dualistic mind cannot think two thoughts at the same time. The mind of a buddha, however, can know all fields of knowledge, everything there is to know, clearly and distinctly in a single instant. The three factors are subtle concepts [rnam rtog phra ba] while afflictions are considered to be coarse concepts [rnam rtog rags pa].

**Text section 119 / stanza 32:**

Bodhicitta is the quintessence [snying po'i yang zhun] of the sublime dharma, the quintessence of the three wheels of promulgation, of all the teachings of the Buddha.

**Text section 120 / stanza 33:**

*The path of existence* [srid pa'i lam] is the saṃsāric path of the three realms of existence [srid pa khams gsum 'khro ba'i lam]. The three realms are the realm of desire ['dod khams], the realm of form [gzugs khams], and the realm of formlessness [gzugs med khams].

*The six classes* [rigs drug] refers to the six classes of beings within saṃsāra: the three lower realms [ngan song gsum / ngan 'gro gsum] of the hell beings [dmyal], pretas [yi dvags] and animals [dud 'gro] and the three higher realms [mtho ris gsum] of the gods [lha], humans [mi] and asuras [lha ma yin]. The phrase *deathless peace* ['chi med zhi ba] connotes the level of the Buddha [sangs rgyas kyi go sa].

The phrase *(all attainments) that have been described above* [gong du ji skad bstan pa rnams kyi don du] simply means 'as explained before' [sngon ma bshad pa ltar du] or 'according

to the meaning explained before' [sngon ma bshad pa nang bzhin don]. The term *to remain* [nyer gnas / nye bar gnas pa] here connotes that the bodhisattva remains with all sentient beings within saṃsāra.

*Like someone who sets up a food-tent on Mount Tsari* [tsa ri'i tshos kha bzung ba bzhin du] means[79] that it is difficult to even donate food to the pilgrims around Mount Tsari because they are constantly moving. You have to set up your hearth on the road and donate the food to whoever comes by. In the same way, the bodhisattva sets up camp in saṃsāra and teaches sentient beings who are constantly and restlessly circling, just like the pilgrims at Mount Tsari restlessly circumambulate the mountain.

The bodhisattva is the benefactor [sbyin bdag] of all 'guests', beings of the six realms of saṃsāra. Through the power of his bodhicitta, he takes rebirth in saṃsāra and establishes all infinite beings in the levels of attainment explained above, the supreme bliss, the deathless peace, and so forth.

**Text section 121 / stanza 34:**

When you invite guests you must give them some food or drink. The bodhisattva invites all sentient beings into the presence of the buddhas and bodhisattvas and promises to grant them the level of perfect enlightenment. After making this promise, the bodhisattva encourages the gods and asuras to be happy and to support his bodhisattva activities. Therefore, this section is called *causing others to generate joy*.

The *subject* about which one is going to talk [bshad gzhi /phar skad cha bshad rgyu'i yod'am gzhi] must have been *previously established* [sngon du blang / sngon du bkod]. All sentient beings are summoned into the presence of the buddhas and bodhisattvas, who are acting as witnesses.

**Text section 122 / stanza 34:**

The seventy-five glorious protectors of the pure realms always assist sentient beings who practice virtue. They are the *virtuous gods*, or gods of the side of virtue [dkar phyogs kyi lha]. The bodhisattva makes the commitment in the presence of the buddhas and bodhisattvas to establish all beings on the level of buddhahood or in temporary happiness. Therefore, think that all gods, asuras, nāgas and so forth, rejoice and are happy about your promise.

Those gods of the higher realms, who are able to perceive that you have given rise to bodhicitta, will shower you with their blessings whenever you receive or renew the bodhisattva precepts. Rejoicing that you have become a bodhisattva, they rain flowers down upon you. During the ceremony of receiving the bodhisattva precepts, after completing the recitation of stanzas 26, 27 and 28 from the section of generating joy

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79 The term 'pilgrim' can also mean 'temporary market' / 'temporary restaurant' / 'temporary dwelling' or 'back-pack trekker' [tshos kha].

about oneself, someone blows a conch-shell to summon all the gods and everyone recites stanza 34 from the section called causing others to generate joy.

At this point, the ceremony is concluded with recitations of aspirations of auspiciousness [bkra shis pa'i smon lam]. When the newly born bodhisattvas recite their aspirations, they throw handfuls of flowers and rice into the air as a flower offering to all the buddhas and bodhisattvas. The buddhas, bodhisattvas and gods rejoice that we have become bodhisattvas, while we generate joy that we have now obtained the unique chance to become bodhisattvas. This is a time for all to celebrate and be happy.

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